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[THE DREAM FULFILLED.]

WARNED BY THE PLANETS.

CHAPTER XI.

Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul.

A COUPLE of summers had gone by, and Lord Strathspey's twins had grown to be fine children, and by degrees the earl became a little forgetful of the terrible prediction which haunted him so persistently. He had locked away the mysterious parchment, with its subtle odour of Eastern poison, and strove with all his mind and might to forget the whole matter.

It was merely a hoax, played upon him by some cunning fellow, as Doctor Renfrew said, and he tried to banish it from his memory. He succeeded in a measure, and would have been a happy man but for his wife's ill health and settled melancholy. It seemed to be growing into a disease, which the old physician had hinted might terminate in insanity.

Nothing that her husband could do, and he left nothing undone, succeeded in rousing her from that still, cold, almost lifeless despair. She was tender, affectionate, mindful of him and of her children; but when he remonstrated with her and implored her to tell him the cause of her sorrow she answered only by sobs and tears and passionate embraces.

The earl was deeply grieved, and when Doctor Renfrew again suggested travel he at once prepared to follow his advice.

Accordingly this third summer found them all snugly settled, first in a lovely little Alpine village, and later in the Tyrol, for Lady Strathspey's old unrest had returned, and she could not long content herself in one place. Her husband determined to gratify her to the extent of her wishes that summer; the following winter he intended to spend in London. His fine mansion in Grosvenor Square had been closed now during three successive seasons, and the earl, who was a social man and fond of society, purpose returning to that circle which he was so well fitted to adorn.

Another change also was expected. Hendrick,

Judith's lover, was expected home from sea. His voyage had already been prolonged beyond all expectation, and he would surely arrive in the autumn or early winter, at which time the long-deferred marriage was to take place, and Judith was to receive her marriage dowry.

Midsummer found the earl's party located for a few weeks in the Tyrol. They occupied rooms in a pleasant house, and enjoyed the fresh mountain air and simple fare with a keen relish. The children grew and thrived, and Lady Strathspey's wan cheeks even began to glow with a faint flush of returning health.

Their drives and excursions amid the mountains seem to constitute the invalid's chief delight. She was always eager to go, in spite of fatigue or weakness, and her eyes scanned every object, every farmhouse, every valley and mountain peak, with an eager, wistful look of expectation that was curious to behold.

Lord Strathspey, watching her covertly, began to ponder upon the old surgeon's hints, and to acknowledge with a pang of unutterable pain that they were not wholly groundless. His idolized, lovely countess surely stood upon the awful, awful verge of insanity.

One lovely August morning, when the green valleys of the Rhetian Alps looked like another Arcadia, the earl and his party—consisting of his own family and Colonel Chudley of the Guards (who was godfather to the twins), and Sir Varney Drummond and his wife, Lady Cecilia Drummond (formerly Honourable Cecilia Cavendish, of Cavendish Manor, Cumberland), who had joined them at Innsbruck—started out for a day's excursion amid the mountains.

The party was an exceptionally aristocratic one, for Lord Strathspey and his family boasted the very best blue blood, and Sir Varney was a baronet by blood inheritance, and his beautiful wife, with her rare brunette face and blooming cheeks and her languishing Spanish eyes, was grandniece to a duke; and even the Indian officer came of a pure and sturdy old stock, and was looking forward to the day when he should hear the queen say to him, "Rise up, Sir Knight," the magic words that would constitute him a man of

rank and for ever lift him up above the vulgar populace.

This exceptional party started out bright and early that golden August morning with carriages, dogcart, saddle-horses, hampers of provisions, baskets of champagne, and every imaginable facility for enjoyment.

The colonel, of course, rode his gallant black hunter, while his wife, a dimpled, chirrupy little woman, ensconced herself amid the cushions in Lady Strathspey's carriage.

The two children and their nurses, Judith and the woman who brought the young earl home, and who bore the very euphonious name of Lola Dundas, occupied an open landau to themselves, and, as Sir Varney Drummond very gallantly volunteered as escort to the countess and Mrs. Colonel Chudleigh, of course Lord Strathspey could do nothing less than mount his bonnie Arab mare and gallop by the side of Lady Cecilia, for her ladyship scorned a carriage and would have nothing short of a fleet and fiery horse.

And no wonder, for she sat in her saddle like another Zenobia, her green velvet habit showing off the fine proportions of her superb figure, her bewildering face all aglow with life and animation, as she drove the spur at her dainty heel into her horse's flank and grasped her reins with a hand that seemed to be cut out of marble and nerved with steel.

The earl gave his Arab the reins and shot off at her side, down the sloping green valley, with a thrill of delicious enjoyment. He was a man of animation and spirit, passionately fond of gaiety and amusement; and, glancing back at the still, almost lifeless figure of his wife reclining amid the cushions of the carriage, he heaved a little sigh of discontent, the contrast between her and the glowing, glorious creature at his side was so great.

Moreover this lovely Lady Cecilia and the Earl of Strathspey were old friends. Cavendish Manor and Sevenoaks Grange, the earl's Cumberland estate, were contiguous, and in his annual shooting excursions to that place years and years before he had

formed the acquaintance of the Honourable Cecilia. Indeed there was a rumour that he fell in love with her, after a boyish fashion, and even went so far as to commit himself by making her an offer.

But the old earl, his father, who was then alive, came between them with his stern edict, and like a true Strathpey the young man obeyed, and, turning his back upon the duke's grand-niece, went down to Auckland Oaks and fell in love with blue-eyed Lady Marguerite, and married her with his father's consent and blessing.

And he loved her truly, for in all the realm there was not a more lovable woman, and thought no more of his boyish frolic with Cecilia Cavendish than one thinks of any other madcap, youthful adventure.

And on that August morning, as he galloped through the Tyrol with this charmer of his boyhood, now matured into a glorious woman, in his secret soul the pale, sad-eyed wife reclining in the carriage, the loving mother of his two children, was dearer to him than all the world and all the lovely women it contained; yet, glancing back and contrasting her with the glowing Hebe beside him, half-unconsciously he heaved a discontented sigh, and the next instant thrilled with excited enjoyment at every leap of his Arab.

Lady Cecilia fairly scintillated in the sunlight. Her cheeks glowed, her Spanish eyes flashed, her long, raven ringlets, odorous with some subtle sweetness, streamed like a banner on the summer air, and her sweet, happy voice rang out full of thrilling music.

Nevertheless, observing her closely, with keen, impartial eye, one might have detected something in the sinuous grace of her elegant form, in the very movements of her neck and glorious head, in the subtle fascinations of her eyes, and the flash of her ivory teeth, that suggested a burr of ideas of one of those deadly reptiles that charm and bewilder their hapless victims even while they are waiting to inflict the deadly and fatal blow.

Of course Lord Strathpey, not at any time over acute in his perceptions, made no such observations as these; he flew along at her side, inhaling the exhilarating mountain air and listening to her musical tones, every nerve in his body strung to keenest enjoyment.

"What a delicious morning!" she cried, giving the gilded spur a fresh plunge into her horse's flank and causing him to bound off like a deer. "Oh, I do so dearly love to gallop like this; and there's Sir Varney, dear, good soul, can't be coaxed out of a small pace—the only incompatibility between us. Well, well, one cannot have perfect happiness. How gloriously you ride, my lord!" she exclaimed, with another plunge of the spur and a flashing glance of the subtle eyes; "tis worth half one's life-time to have a gallop like this! You enjoy it, do you not?"

The earl expressed himself enraptured, and urged his Arab on at a mad pace, experiencing a comfortable feeling of gratified vanity—as most men will when a lovely woman praises and flatters them, no matter how lightly they may hold her.

"What a pity dear Lady Strathpey's health continues so bad!" continued the siren; "she really looks miserable. It must be a great grief to you, my lord."

"It is," replied the earl, in an unsteady voice and with another discontented sigh, "the one sorrow of my life."

"What can be the cause, I wonder?" continued Lady Cecilia, sympathetically; "she was such a lovely, blooming girl! I should think her happiness ought to restore her now that you have your son again. What a mystery that was, Lord Strathpey!"

Something in the utterance of these last few words and in the metallic ring of his companion's voice struck the earl as being peculiar, and he turned sharply to see her face. The sight thrilled him with amazed horror. For one brief instant it seemed the face of a demon, contorted with vile and rancorous passions; but in the next breath she was smiling again, as bright and as bewildering as ever. Lord Strathpey fairly caught his breath, half believing he had been the dupe of a momentary dream.

"Come," said Lady Drummond, without waiting for his reply, "let us gallop right up this mountain path. Do you think your Arab is equal to it, my lord?"

The earl thought she was; and in the excitement of the moment he forgot the strange expression that had so startled him and followed the charming lady's lead up the dangerous ascent. But years afterwards he remembered that fiendish face—and remembered it to his cost.

Meanwhile the carriages followed in the distance with Colonel Chudleigh riding gallantly beside the one which contained his wife and the countess. Having lost sight of the equestrians, they drew up in a lovely little valley lying between two mountain

spurs, and the ladies and the children got out and wandered about, admiring the scenery and gathering wild flowers.

The countess strolled a short distance from her companion, leading her little daughter by the hand. She struck into a sinuous little path, and, following it up for a few yards, turned the corner of a picturesque bit of thicket, and came in full view of a small farmhouse or shepherd's dwelling.

For one moment she stood transfixed, then her shrill shriek startled a thousand echoes amid the mountain peaks.

The colonel reached her first, and caught her in his arms, for she seemed upon the point of fainting. But she motioned him away.

"'Tis nothing," she panted, "only a momentary weakness. Leave me, please, and—Judith!"

Judith hurried up, as white and tremulous as her lady. The countess grasped her hand.

"Judith, Judith," she cried, "see there. We have found it at last!"

"At last, my lady!" echoed Judith.

"And, oh, heaven! look yonder!" continued the countess as an old man came out of the cottage; "there's the old man—the very hair and beard and clothing; and there to the left, Judith, there's the bald cliff upon whose summit the milch-goat suckled my precious babe!"

"I see, my lady, 'tis all the same. I knew the spot the moment we entered the valley," replied Judith.

"Then come," cried the countess, starting forward, her cheek flushed with hectic spots, her eyes glittering, her breath coming in gasps; "come and let us learn the rest."

She started off in the direction of the farmhouse, but her husband, who had heard her cry in the distance, and had hurried back, at this instant reached her side.

"What's the matter, Marguerite?" he said, putting his arm round her. "Whither are you going?"

She flushed and trembled and drew herself away from his support.

"I am going to the farmhouse yonder," she faltered. "I would like a drink of warm milk."

"Then I will accompany you," replied the earl, promptly.

"No, no," she protested, with terrified vehemence, "I would rather not. Judith will go. Do you remain here with the children."

"As you like," replied her husband, coldly.

The countess started forward at a rapid pace, followed by Judith.

"What is it, my lord?" questioned Lady Drummond, approaching the earl's side.

He struck his forehead with his clenched hand, and his voice was hoarse with pain as he replied:

"Lady Drummond, I believe my wife is mad!"

CHAPTER XII.

Oh, when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy
Bath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of woe, the watchful night,
For all her sorrows, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight?

Southey.

THE countess and Judith drew near the little farmhouse. It was a pretty, snug place, a box of a cottage overhung with running creepers, with quaint latticed windows and sloping eaves, beneath which the wrens and martins twittered. A square, green yard, shaded by a giant oak, beneath which an old man, wearing the simple garb of a Tyrolean peasant, sat, tucking at a broken sheep-bell, which he was vainly trying to mend.

As she approached the wicket gate the countess grew deathly white and leaned heavily on Judith's arm for support.

"Oh, Judith," she murmured, "how familiar everything seems! I feel as if I had lived here!"

"Yes, my lady," replied the girl, her own cheeks very pale, and her voice unsteady; "there's not one thing different; I even remember the peculiar make of the windows and that smooth, worn stone at the door. Oh, it is very strange!"

They opened the wicket and crossed the green yard. The old peasant dropped his bell and rose to his feet as they approached.

"My lady is faint this morning," spake Judith; "could you be good enough to let her have a drink of fresh milk?"

"Ay, ay, to be sure," replied the old man, nodding incessantly. "Come in, come in; my old woman's laying the dinner now—come right in."

They followed him across the smooth stone step and through the vine-shaded doorway; and there, in the centre of the white, sand-floored, stood a square table set out with shining pewter platters.

Lady Strathpey gasped for breath and clung tightly to Judith's arm.

The wife, who sat in the chimney corner, with her spectacles on her nose, rose up with a startled exclamation.

"Why, bless me!" she cried, seizing upon the countess and assisting her to a seat on the wooden settle; "poor thing! what ails her?"

"She's ill and faint," explained Judith, "and came to beg a drink of new milk."

"And she shall have it," continued the old woman; "but sit ye down, yourself," she added, glancing at Judith's white cheeks. "Ye be like a pair of ghosts, both of ye. Come, sit down, and I'll have the dinner on the table in a wink. 'Tis the very thing, too, as I suit ye, being ailing—chicken broth and dumplings, with a drop of beer to wash it down; my old man always wants it when he's ailing. Come, sit ye down."

Judith obeyed, sitting down beside her mistress, and the woman flew about, getting her savoury meal upon the table, while her husband sat on the stone door-sill, sleeping at the fires that buzzed in the noon sunlight.

Presently a gleeful shout and a ripping burst of childish laughter broke upon the silence, and from a little back bed-chamber a little fellow, some three summers old, came dancing into the room.

Seeing the strangers, he came to a sudden halt, and stood like a statue, his scarlet smock-frock disclosing his round, bare legs and dimpled feet, and a queer little cap, ornamented with a long feather, surmounting his head, with its profuse flaxen ringlets. There he stood, his great blue eyes wide with childish wonder.

"Why, Romulus," cried the old woman, "can't ye say how d'ye do to the ladies? Have ye forgot your manners?"

Romulus doffed his plumed cap, and dipped his curly flaxen head.

"How d'ye do, ladies?" he said, obediently.

At the sound of the sweet, flapping voice the countess, who had sat since the child's appearance like one turned to stone, uttered a pathetic cry, and, springing forward, caught the boy to her bosom.

"Oh, my baby! my lost darling! my own precious child!" she cried, between her bursting sobs and passionate kisses; "I knew I should find you, my precious lost lamb!"

The old peasant and his wife stood thunderstruck; but the little fellow, nothing daunted, wound his chubby arms about the lady's neck and put his ruddy cheek against hers.

"Don't ky!" he hissed, entreatingly; "Rommie likes lady!—Rommie likes her!"

"Do ye see, old man?" quoth the wife to her husband, her voice full of pain. "What did I tell ye the night ye found him? Didn't I say just as we got our hearts set on him some folks would come and snatch him away? Yes, I did; and I wish ye'd a left him to the milch-goat, that I do."

Whereupon, leaving her dinner only half dished, she sat down and, carrying her apron to her eyes, began to cry herself.

The boy's quick eyes soon noticed her, and, clambering down from Lady Strathpey's knee, he ran to her side.

"Don't oo ky, grand-mudder," he pleaded, tagging at her apron; "Rommie likes grand-mudder too."

The old man caught him up in his arms.

"He's mine! the boy's mine!" he said, almost savagely; "and I'll give him up to no one. His father and mother abandoned him to the mercy of my milch-goat, and he's mine."

The countess and Judith both uttered a simultaneous cry at this confirmation of their strange, strange dream.

The old man regarded them with angry suspicion.

"My good women," he said, "what does all this mean? Can't ye explain yourselves and tell me what's the matter?"

By a strong effort Lady Strathpey controlled herself and wiped the streaming tears from her cheeks.

"My good sir," she replied, "the explanation I have to give you is a strange one, which possibly you may not believe—indeed I cannot credit it at times myself, but my maid here can bear me out in what I have to say."

Whereupon she related all the mysterious circumstances of the disappearance of her babe on the night of his birth, and also the strange dream which Judith had first dreamed, then herself.

The old man and his wife listened in speechless amazement, while the summer sunshine crept slowly over the sand-floored floor and the savoury dinner grew cold upon the table.

When she had finished they sat looking into each other's faces in utter consternation.

"It must be that Heaven sent us the dream," continued the countess, "for it has haunted me day and night ever since. I could not rest one moment; and this morning the instant my eyes beheld this place I knew it, and I know as surely, although another usurps her place, that the boy there is my own, the babe who was stolen from my arms in the very hour

of his birth, the rightful heir to the earldom of Strathpey Castle.

"Now, my good people," she continued, "I have told you my strange story, and I implore you to let me hear yours. Tell me how and when you came by this child, and I pray there may be some proof by which I can restore him to his rightful place."

The old couple sat in utter silence for a few moments, overwhelmed by what they had heard. The idea that it was a young earl they had fostered filled them with absolute affright.

The old man spoke at last.

"Old woman," he said, drawing a long breath and resuming his seat on the doorstep, "you be glibber o' the tongue than I am. You tell the story."

The old woman put Romulus from her knee and wiped her eyes with her apron.

"Talk of being glib of tongue now," she began, "after hearing such a story as hers; why, the very memory's beat out of me. But I'll do the best I can, your highness," she continued, bowing profoundly to the countess, "and if my memory be bad I'll stick to the truth."

"It was on the tenth day of January—I remember that well, because our red heifer had a calf on New Year's Day, and on that very morning the old man says: 'Old woman, the red heifer's calf be ten days old to-day, and you can begin to steal a mite of the milk; you tend to her and I'll go back after the goats.' So I went down to the cattle-shed and milked and fed the heifer, and came home and laid out dinner. By that time here comes the old man, all of a flutter. 'Molly,' he says, 'the head milk-goat is missing,' and nothing would do but I must go and help him find her."

"Well, away we went, and a pretty tramp we had through the valleys and up the mountains till I thought I should drop in my shoes. At last, towards sundown, we spies her, perched right on the top of that bald cliff out at the left yonder."

"Oh, my lady!" ejaculated Judith.

"Go on, my good woman," urged the countess.

"Well, there she be perched right atop of the cliff. 'Why, old woman,' says the old man, 'she's got kids! Who'd a thought it? You must go up and bring them down in your apron, while I fetch her down.'"

"So up we tussled, my very bones aching with pain, and, Heaven bless you, my dear lady, what do you suppose we see when we reached her? Not a kid, but a little live baby, and it a sucking the goat, and its dear little mouth all wet with the milk."

Lady Strathpey covered her face, convulsive sobs shaking her from head to foot.

"I didn't feel my aches a bit after that," the old woman went on; "I take up the child, and the old man shoulders the milk-goat, and down we comes."

"The clothes!" gasped the countess. "Have you the clothes the child had on when you found him?"

"Yes, I kept them. 'They may be of use to the child one of these days,' says the old man. But that day, as I was a telling you, we brought the child home, and do you know my old man he takes the milk-goat right into my back room; and there he keeps her, only turning her out to graze once in awhile, and the baby he sucks that goat for six round months, and I never see a child thrive as he did in my life."

"My old man used to be book-learned when he was young," she went on, glancing sidlingly at the old shepherd on the sunny doorstep, "and he says he's read of a boy as a wolf suckled, and he was called Romulus—so nothing would do but the baby must be named after him. So Romulus was his name."

She paused for an instant, her lips quivering.

"We've no children of our own," she went on, at last, her voice shaking. "We had a boy once, as promising a lad as ever lived, but he went to sea, and was lost fifteen years ago. You can't tell, my lady, how we took to this child! 'Heaven has sent him,' the old man said, 'to cheer us in our old age! We've done the best we could for him, and it's like tearing out our hearts to give him up, but, hearing your story, I'm convinced as he's your child, and Heaven sent you to find him!'"

The old man drew the wondering boy to his arms, and, resting his old forehead on his faxen head, sobbed like a child. Lady Strathpey was deeply moved.

"My dear, good friends," she said, "don't grieve now; I'm not going to take the child from you. I shall want you to keep him for me, a long time perhaps, until I can get proofs, and all that, to establish him in his rightful place. You have never heard ought in regard to him, or found out how he came on the mountain, I suppose?"

"Never a word, my lady," replied the old man, brightening up at the prospect of keeping the child;

"My lady," whispered Judith, at this juncture, "here comes Lord Strathpey."

The countess rose in consternation.

"It is my husband," she explained, "but I do not wish him to know about the child yet. Please take him away."

The old woman caught up the boy and rushed into the adjoining room, closing the door after her.

"Take this," cried Lady Strathpey, drawing a purse from her pocket and forcing it into the old man's hand; "I will come again soon—he good to my boy, and may Heaven bless you."

She reached the wicket just in time to meet the earl.

He looked at her flushed cheeks and swollen eyes in amazement.

"Marguerite," he said as he drew her arm through his, "I was so impatient that I came to seek you. For Heaven's sake tell me! what all this means? What do you know of these people? What ails you?"

"Trust me, dearest Angus," she sobbed, clinging to his arm; "you shall know all soon—only trust me."

The earl conducted her back to the waiting carriages with the awful suspicion growing stronger and stronger in his mind that Doctor Renfrew was right and his wife was indeed in danger of insanity.

CHAPTER XIII.

What dire offence from amorous causes springs,
What mighty contests rise from trivial things. Pope.

LORD STRATHPEY rode back to his lodgings, beside the bewitching Lady Cecilia, in moody silence. All the spirit and zest of the morning had left him, and the fair siren put forth her charms and sorceries in vain; he scarcely noticed her, and forgot to reply to her when she spoke.

She drove her spur into her horse's flank and set her white teeth together in rage at her own ill success.

Lady Cecilia was very vain, and nothing so exasperated her as to have her charms under-rated. But she was likewise very resolute, and she concluded to let the moody earl ride on in silence and bide her time. For as surely as the afternoon sunlight lay warm and bright upon the green valleys of the Tyrol so surely should this self-same moody earl—this man who had dared years before to trifle with her—be brought down at her very feet and made to expiate his folly in sackcloth and ashes. Had Lady Cecilia forgotten? Had the memory of those old days at Cavan-dish Manor faded from her—those fresh, hopeful days when she saw a coronet glimmering above her royal brow, and a life of love and triumph outstretching before her? Do women like her ever forget a wrong or a disappointment?

My lady set her white teeth and arched her graceful neck, and her blue-black eyes glittered with a hateful phosphorescent light as she galloped along by the earl's side.

But the earl was perfectly unconscious, being absorbed in his own bitter reflections.

Lord Strathpey, as we have said, was a trifle superstitious, and, in addition, a little inclined to be jealous and over-exacting; and with all his profound pity and terror at the thought that his lovely countess was on the verge of insanity, he still felt angered and injured because she had—even in her wanderings, as he believed—dared to have a secret which she kept from him.

He resolved to get at the bottom of the whole matter; and, as soon as he had seen Lady Cecilia and his family safely quartered in their lodgings, he strode out of the house, and, remounting his weary Arab, galloped straight across the Tyrol valleys to the shepherd's cottage.

The old wife saw him coming before he reached the wicket, and, being a woman possessed of sharp wits, she divined the object of his visit; and, catching up little Romulus, who sat beneath the great oak in the afternoon sunlight, she whisked him off to the cattle-shed, where her husband was, and was back again at the cottage door by the time the earl had dismounted.

He strode through the wicket and across the yard haughty and stern.

"My good woman," he began, without salutation or preface, "I have come to ask you a question; and I want a straightforward answer."

"My lord earl, my poor tongue is at your grace's service," stammered the old woman, with a deep courtesy, chuckling all the while in her sleeve at the irate peer's manner, and at the fact of being asked such a question.

"The countess, my wife, was here to-day," continued Lord Strathpey, waving aside the seat she offered him, "and I want to know what she came for."

"For a drink of new milk, your honour," responded the woman, glibly.

"Silence!" thundered the earl, growing black with

passion, "I want no prevarication. Tell me what my wife knows of you and you of her."

"Why, bless my soul, your grace," replied the old woman, her gray eyes all of a twinkle, "I only know she be the Countess o' Strathpey, and wife to your lordship, 'cause the maid told me the same, and asked me for the drink o' fresh milk, her ladyship being faint—that's all."

"Tis false," cried the angry nobleman, "and you know it. Didn't the countess come out to me flushed and tear-stained? Tell me what excited her so; I've a right to know. Tell me, or—I'll make you!"

The old wife fairly chuckled in his face.

"My lord," she said, "be ye the king on his throne my tongue's my own, and no one, whether peer or peasant, can make it wag; why don't ye ask your wife?"

The earl was well nigh choking with passion, for, like all his race before him, he had a hot, unreasonable temper.

If it had been a man he would have struck him down with the butt end of his whip; being a woman, he strode away and left her.

At the wicket a sudden thought struck him and he turned back.

"My good woman," he said, taking a heavy purse from his pocket as he spoke, "I have strong reasons for finding out what it is that troubles my wife, I'm afraid her mind is impaired—take this, and tell me what brought her hither."

The old woman eyed the yellow gold with another chuckle.

"I've nothing to tell your grace," she replied, "and if I had your gold wouldn't make my tongue wag no sooner than your hard words."

Smothering his indignation, he strode back to the wicket, vaulted into his saddle, and was on the point of galloping off when a little figure in a scarlet smock and plumed cap shot up right before his horse's feet.

The earl drew in his fiery steed and called out, savagely:

"Get from under my horse's feet, will you?"

"Romnie not under ee feets," replied the little fellow, looking up fearlessly at the fine horse and its wrathful rider.

Something in the finely cut face, great sea-blue eyes, and profuse flaxen curls made the nobleman's heart thrill.

He gazed down for an instant into the child's face like one bewildered.

"Great Heaven," he muttered, "what a likeness! 'Tis Lady Pearl's face over again. Little man, who are you?"

"I'm Rommie, I lives wid grand-mudder," answered the boy, fearlessly.

"Ah! Well, you're a fine lad for a peasant's son—get out of my way."

And away went the baffled peer like the wind, pondering moodily, and as he pondered, with the boy's face mirrored in his memory, a horrible idea flashed through his mind, piercing his heart like a poisoned blade, and almost making him reel in his saddle.

It did not occur to the Countess of Strathpey that she had forgotten to ask the peasant woman if there was a birth-mark on the boy's arm until after she was snugly settled in her chamber for the night; then her impatience and regret knew no bounds.

She would have stolen forth and made her way to the cottage through the darkness of the night; but for Judith, who implored and almost compelled her to forego the visit till the morrow.

But when the morrow came what was the poor woman's consternation to hear that the earl had taken a sudden resolve to go to Sevenoaks Grange, in Cumberland, for the shooting season, and had made his preparations to set out at once.

It was all in vain that she begged him to defer the journey for a day or two on account of her feebleness; he watched her with a suspicious look in his moody eyes, and replied coldly that he would start at once; if she were able to go rambling over the fields to shepherd's huts she could certainly bear the journey to Sevenoaks, and he was sure that the Cumberland air would do her good!

The poor countess was almost frantic, and watched in vain for some chance to steal out and make her way to the cottage, but the earl's eye followed her every movement, and in half an hour the carriages were at the door.

"Never mind, my lady," whispered Judith as she assisted at her toilet, "when we get to Sevenoaks you can send me down, or manage it in some way—don't betray yourself now, my lord is already angry and suspicious."

And with a pang of unutterable pain the countess saw that Judith's words were true; the face of the husband she loved a thousand times better than her own life was full of anger and grief: the eyes, that

hitherto had ever regarded her with looks of tenderest love, now watched her with covert and suspicious glances.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

MATERIAL FOR ROOFING.—According to the invention of Mr. J. Erichsen, of Copenhagen, best quality pasteboard is boiled in anhydrous coal-tar, limmer asphalt, powdered silicate of soda and potash, and liquid flint, or other silicious soluble earth. It is then passed through rollers, then sanded, then rolled again. When fastened to the boards it is coated with Erichsen's India mastic, consisting of anhydrous coal-tar, limmer asphalt, Portland cement, Farnham rock, and other soluble silicious earth, all boiled together and well stirred.

COATING ZINC WITH IRON.—The objects should first be plunged into a hot solution of 160 grms. ferrous sulphate and 90 grms. sal ammoniac in 2,500 c.c. of boiling water. After two minutes' exposure they should be removed and brushed off in water. This has for its object simply the cleansing of the surface. They are then again placed in the bath and heated, without brushing or washing, until the sal ammoniac fumes are gone, then washed, and this operation repeated three or four times, when a coating of iron will be formed on the zinc, which takes a fine polish under the brush.

GALVANIC ACTION ON IRON SHIPS.—It is an alarming fact in practice, and one that, being so perfectly in accordance with theory, ought to awaken no surprise, that should even a minute piece of copper come into contact and so remain, with the inside bottom of an iron ship then wetted with bilge water, as under the circumstances of the case it necessarily must be, active galvanic energy is established between the two metals, and iron being the sacrificial metal of the couple, the bottom will sooner or later—sooner rather than later—be eaten through in a hole somewhat larger than the superimposed copper.

PREPARATION OF PURE INDIGOTINE BY MEANS OF CARBOLIC ACID.—According to Mehu, carboic acid, with the aid of heat, has the power of dissolving indigo blue readily. On cooling, the greater portion is deposited in a crystalline state. The cold solution has an intense purple blue colour. In order to prevent the carboic acid from congealing as it cools a little alcohol may be added, which causes the greater part of the colour to be deposited. Camphor may be used instead of alcohol to the extent of one-fifteenth, or benzene. By using 500 grammes of carboic acid we can obtain two grammes of pure indigo blue (indigotine) in crystals which, under the microscope, appear remarkably regular. Mehu employs indigo which has been previously washed, first with water, then with very dilute hydrochloric acid, and then repeatedly extracted with boiling alcohol.

IMPROVED HOT-BLAST STOVES.—According to the invention of Messrs. Jones, ironmasters, of Dudley, the vertical pipes through which the blast passes, and by which it is heated, are arranged around one or more vertical hollow columns or flues, the said blast pipes being situated in a vertical or tubular chamber formed by the said hollow column or columns and the outer brick of the stove. The waste heat from the blast furnace or flame from independent fires enters near the bottom of the chamber, and ascends therein and passes around and about the blast pipes, a portion of the flame striking obliquely against the pipes and giving a rotary or circulating motion to the flame around the pipes. The flame and heated air pass out at the top of the chamber and are conducted by flues into the central hollow column or flue, down which they descend. The said column or flue is thereby intensely heated, and its heat radiates unto the blast pipes and contributes largely to the heating of the blast. The descending current of the flame and heated air is finally conducted by a horizontal flue to the chimney stack.

A SIMPLE PLAN FOR POLISHING PHOTOGRAPHS.

CERTAINLY a great number who have essayed the collodion and gelatin process for finishing photographs have met with many difficulties and uncertainties inherent to the method, and have, consequently, thrown it up; it was so with myself, and I went back again to an older plan of enamelling, which I had previously employed.

In the year 1865 I met with a photograph which had emanated from the studio of M. Dauthendey, of Wazburg, the picture being a bust with white oval margin upon a black ground. The photograph possessed a magnificent polish, and was of a very brilliant character; and experiments that I made with paper varnishes, etc., were all fruitless in giving the degree of finish possessed by the Dauthendey picture. Finally I came upon the following

plan: I mounted about a dozen carte prints upon a card, covered them with a solution of gum—or, better still, gelatin—and when they had dried and been rolled and retouched they were polished with a solution of white shellac in spirits of wine. This operation was conducted as if it was a question of furniture polishing, a rag being moistened with the liquid and rubbed to and fro over the prints for some time. The pictures, after standing the night, were again subjected to a second polishing.

Whenever the rag exhibited a tendency to stick to the surface a minute quantity (say half a drop) of almond oil was applied to the photograph, and the operation of polishing continued. The photographs are subsequently cut out of the card. It is better to polish a number of small photographs at one time like this, as a large surface is more easily operated upon than a smaller one. The process is, probably, the same as that of M. Dauthendey, to be purchased for an honorarium of four florins.

The method, as already stated, is much to be preferred to the collodion and gelatin enamelling process, so often recommended. C. H.

SUMMER.

SUMMER'S coming, sweetly coming,
Breezes fan her golden wings;
Insects blithe are humming, humming,
Sweet the note the robin sings.

Softest tufts of blushing blossoms
Plume with sweets each tiny spray,
And fair earth her virgin bosom
Covers with the buds of May.

Flora's handmaids throng to meet us,
Strewing lilies o'er the plain,
While glad hill-tops sing to greet us,
Yielding gifts of golden grain.

Every shining leaf a letter,
Given from an angel's hand,
Indicating something better
Waits us in the promised land.

Lovely earth, it is my Father
Veils thy beauty o'er His brow,
Each fair thing I love to gather—
Glittering gems, His love to show.

M. J. B.

BUST OF CHARLES I.—The Queen has recently obtained possession of a very interesting art treasure, namely in a copy, of the bust of Charles I., by Bernini, which was originally placed in Whitehall. It is well known that Vandyke painted his celebrated "Three Heads of Charles I." to enable Bernini, in Italy, to produce this bust, and that whilst in Whitehall it suffered from fire. Fortunately a marble copy had been previously made, and this it is which Her Majesty has obtained and placed with the picture in the Vandyke Room at Windsor.

SEALS AND SALMON.—Mr. Frank Buckland writes:—"Seals hunt salmon much in the same way that hounds hunt hares. Seals swim faster than salmon, the fish escape by doubling and evading their pursuers. In clear water, and with little wind and no surf, salmon swim deep, or keep very close in-shore, sheltering themselves under sea-weed, as hares do in covers. The marks or scratches on salmon, especially one side of the salmon, are on those who have made a hairbreadth escape by doubling while the seal has run past its quarry. In very calm weather the seal takes up a position in a bay, or in the track salmon run, raising his head well out of the water, sustaining that position on his hind flippers, his head moving round as if on a universal joint, watching eagerly for a salmon to leap, when he rushes on in that direction with unerring accuracy to the spot. I saw an instance of this kind in June, 1831, in Boyndie Bay, near Banff, in the year when my father and uncle were tenants of the Earl of Fife's fishery in the Deveron. I was then waiting with a crew of men on the beach, before fishing the nets after two hours' flood, the most likely time for salmon to swim in-shore. A seal was in the centre of the bay, about a couple of hundred yards from shore, in the position I have described. A salmon leaped—and at the period I mention they were very scarce—the seal dipped and swam to the spot where the salmon leaped; in less time than I write about his movements up went the seal with the salmon in his claws. The struggle was of short duration; two or three twists, and the salmon was motionless; then the seal in his own fashion began to feast on him, commencing at the head, tearing off the skin, and swallowing lump after lump, and in less than a minute the salmon was in the seal's stomach. When a seal is very hungry and salmon very scarce, especially in the months of February and March, seals are obliged to content themselves with fare such as sea-perch and lump-fish, familiarly known among salmon-fishers as piddlecocks.

The latter is a sluggish fish, paddling along with the propelling power of a small tail, provided with a fringed sucker under the throat, by which it adheres to rocks in stormy weather; it has a rough, prickly skin, and only frequents our shores in spring to deposit its spawn. It swims so slowly that it falls an easy prey to a seal, powerless to escape from him. I have often seen seals take these fish; they make short work of them; there is no bone in them; the seal takes him in his paws as a monkey would an apple, the seal tears off the skin and soon swallows the lumpfish. I have often seen seals feed on these fish, and have found the skins of these fish strewn along the shore."

MASONRY AND BRICKWORK.

HOWEVER gigantic may be the strides with which engineering science has advanced during the last few years, it cannot be denied that, so far as regards the special art of building in masonry or brickwork, the present race of architects and engineers are feeble in conception, timid in execution, and but dwarfs of utter insignificance as compared with the giants of former days.

It would be amusing, or more truly perhaps the reverse, to note in what manner an average architect or engineer of the present age would deal with some of the problems presented to the old masters; for instance, such a one as that successfully solved by the Saracenic builder of the justly celebrated tomb of Mahomet at Beejapore, India, which was as follows: Given a building 135 feet square on plan, and 110 feet high, required to cover the same with a circular dome 124 feet in diameter, and weighing some twelve or fourteen thousand tons. It would be curious to observe how many hundreds of tons of iron our men would consider it imperative to throw into the work. The Saracens, knowing the capabilities of his material, asked for no ironwork, but fearlessly trusted to his masonry, and skilfully corbelled out the square walls at the top to meet and support the circular dome, and to such a bold extent that, at the angles of the building, the projection of the corbelling measured no less than 46 feet.

How infantile appear the greatest exertions of our modern building in comparison with such mammoth works as these. The traditions of the art have been lost, and science has provided no substitute. Our professors, if they do not avoid the subject altogether, treat it in a perfunctory *ignotum per ignotius*, manner, which only serves to make the "darkness more visible," or the "little glooming light"—which may already exist in the student's mind—"more like a shade." We may be taught, for instance, that the line of pressure in an arch must be included in the middle third of its depth, or the arch will tumble down, and we may be treated to many other equally shallow *dicta* based upon hypotheses evolved from purely theoretical considerations, which the bare existence of hundreds of buildings for hundreds of years conclusively demonstrates to be utterly false and untenable.

ANCIENT MUSICAL INSTRUMENT.—A beautifully painted harpsichord, made by "Pascal Taskin, à Paris, 1774," has been lent for exhibition at South Kensington Museum by the Viscount Powerscourt, at the suggestion of his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh when he recently visited Ireland. The inside and outside of the case are covered with oil paintings of landscapes, etc., of a finish and delicacy equal to those of many of the old Dutch pictures.

AN ABSTEMIOUS MONARCH.—The Emperor of Germany is the most abstemious of European monarchs. He takes every day but two small meals. After rising he takes a cup of coffee; at noon some roast beef and potatoes, with a glass of Bordeaux wine; and at seven in the evening a supper, consisting of bread, sausage, and a cup of tea. Persons invited to the Imperial table express their surprise at its extreme simplicity.

SEAWEED RAFTS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC.—The reports from the correspondents of the New York papers who accompany the Hassler exploring expedition notice that in coasting the western side of Patagonia immense quantities of a peculiar variety of seaweed were met with. This is the largest known alga, and grows on these coasts in from six to twenty fathoms of water in vast beds, warning the mariner to beware a near approach, unless he wishes to be entangled in an inextricable network. It throws up from the oceanic depths stems of immense length, some of them 700 ft. to 1,000 ft., the greatest development reached by any member of the vegetable race now in existence. Patches of this seaweed were passed in open sea with large sea-lions sailing on its surface, who were apparently navigating in this novel manner with much satisfaction to themselves and afforded much amusement to their scientific observers.



[THE PACKET.]

THE LOST CORONET.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"One Sparkle of Gold," "Evelyn's Plot," &c., &c."

CHAPTER XLV.

I turned to many a withered hope, to years of grief and pain,
And the cruel wrongs of a bitter world dashed on my
boding brain;

I thought of friends grown worse than cold, of per-
secuting foes,
And I asked of Heaven if ills like these must mar
thy youth's repose.

"RUTH, if you insist upon it I will arrange for you
to accompany me to London; but it is quite contrary
to my wish and to my judgment," said Lady Mont
Sorell, coaxingly, as she stood waiting for the arrival
of the post-bag one fine April morning, with the ever-
haunting "woman of the sea" at her side.

She was pacing the broad terrace walk with a
 spasmodic irregularity of movement that had marked
her every action of late.

Estelle was indeed changed, there could be no doubt
of that, even where the cause of the alteration was
utterly unsuspected. Not that she was less beautiful
than formerly; hers was a style of loveliness that
could scarcely yield even to time in its gorgeous per-
fection, and each year was rather likely to mature
than take from its lustre.

The stately form, the graceful mien, and the peach-
like bloom were developed into more winning and
rich womanhood by each returning season, and at
twenty-five it was probable that Estelle might be even
handsomer than now, when twenty summers had not
rolled over her head.

No, the change was rather in the haughty self-pos-
session, the indomitable pride that had been her
marked characteristics, which had given place to
strange, siffl irritability, wild spirits, or equally un-
natural gloom.

Even the gentle Lady Claud was unable to endure
the strange moods of her child without complaint and
struggle, and again and again she dwelt on those
long-past days when Pauline's angelic sweetness had
soothed her every pang and cheered her delicate, fra-
gile nature by its playful tenderness.

It was almost a relief to the gentle mother when
the London season again came round and offered
prospect of variety and diversion to the wayward
girl.

But Ruth Lovett contemplated the change with very
different feelings, and at the moment in question she
had come suddenly on the young countess with the
query that led to Estelle's deprecating answer.

"You mean that you prefer my absence," was the
bitterly spoken return to the denial she received.

"In London I certainly do," said Estelle, impa-
tiently. "It is simply impossible for me to pay you
the attention you exact when I am there, Ruth. The
house is really not large enough to give you the liberty
and the comfort you demand, and my engagements
will be more numerous than ever this season. Be ad-
vised, there's a good Ruth, and remain here till I re-
turn. I shall be back early in July, for it is not good
taste to drain the dregs of the season, and I will give
directions for every possible attention and comfort
being afforded you."

It was a very different style of manner from the
court, haughty replies that Ruth Lovett formerly re-
ceived at the young countess's hands, but it scarcely
availed to pacify the imperious woman's tyranny.

"I have thought it all over. I shall go, my lady.
It will be too dull and quiet here when the family is
away. Besides, now that Lord Quentin is safe and
may very likely get a pardon and leave to return, I
don't wish his rights to be forgotten, you see."

"How do you know he is safe? How do you know
he is out of England, Ruth?" asked Estelle, eagerly.
"I have no such certainty."

"Of course you ought to know best," was the cool
reply. "But it seems to me but common sense that
if my lord were not safe away from his enemies he
would have been taken long since and brought to
justice. And I am expecting a wedding before the
season's out, after all."

Estelle flushed crimson.
Her utmost efforts could not utterly subdue the
conscious rush of blood to her smooth cheeks.

"Perhaps," she said, "perhaps it might be so; you
would wish to be proud of your foster-child, Ruth."

She gazed unasily in the woman's face.
"Foster-child. Yes, that is the correct term, of
course, and I am quite ready to accept it if it brings
the fitting respect in its train. Of course you would
wish me to be at your wedding, and to accept
your betrothed as your approved bridegroom, fair
countess."

"Certainly, certainly." There is no question of that
just now," returned the girl, quickly. "You shall
have ample notice, Ruth, to prepare wedding favours.
But that would be the same whether in London or at
The Towers, dear Ruth; so if that is your reason for
wishing to come with me you need not disturb your-
self by the effort."

"It matters not; I shall go," was the reply.
"As you will. Come to me to-night and we will
speak of it," replied Estelle, eagerly, as the man bear-
ing the post-bag approached. "You must do as you

please, Ruth; but your own good sense must tell you
that such power should be veiled."

Ruth nodded and moved respectfully aside as the
"Pandora's box" was handed to her young mis-
tress.

Estelle took a key from her chain, opened the
mystic receptacle, and sorted its contents rapidly
with a quick, unfaltering hand.

But Ruth's sharp glance detected a change of colour
in the clear cheek as the process was being gone
through, and the handwriting and post mark on each
of the letters were taken in by that eagle glance and
quick, restless brain.

But Estelle knew it not. She slipped some of the
epistles into her dress as she thought unperceived;
then, arranging the rest, and grasping the packet, in
her hand, she took her way to the house, and Ruth
slowly followed her at a little distance.

"You will come to me to-night, dear Ruth, and we
will arrange all. Trust me, I will do all in my power
to carry out your wishes," were her last hasty words
at parting with the strange, weird woman.

The next instant she was flying actively to her own
apartments with the speed of one who is panting for
the security and freedom of solitude.

"Please, my lady, all is ready," was announced by
the steward of the household at The Towers enter-
ing Estelle's sitting-room on the following morning.
"The carriage is at the door, whenever your lady-
ship pleases to set off."

"Have the servants gone, Rawdon, and is Lady
Claud ready?" asked the girl, looking up from a billet
she was hastily writing.

"My Lady Claud is already in the breakfast-room,
waiting for your pleasure. All the servants have
started except Ruth Lovett, and she is not very well,
I understood, my lady."

"Not well enough to go? How is that?" asked
Estelle, sharply.

"I believe not, my lady. I heard the housekeeper
say that she seemed very languid and ill and drowsy.
I daresay it is the sudden heat. It often affects people
at that age, I know."

A half-smile crossed Estelle's lips.
Certainly the steward counted some five or ten
years more than the woman he was patronizing.

"Well, it is of course impossible to wait after all
the arrangements are so complete," returned the
countess, carelessly. "It will be easy for her to fol-
low when she is better. Send May to me and I will
go at once," she added, quickly.

May was the successor of the newly wedded Louise
as the countess's maid—a quiet and reserved damsel.

who had nevertheless already gained great favour with her lady.

"May, take this restorative to Ruth Lovett before we start," she said, in a suppressed tone. "It will revive her if it be possible to rouse her from her lethargy. If not I am quite at my wife's end how to treat her, and I suppose the doctor had better be sent for."

"Quite unnecessary, I should think, my lady," said the girl, quickly. "Mrs. Lovett is getting old, and I dare say only needs quiet. I will take her the draught, and I do not doubt she will be all right in a day or two."

May disappeared, only to return in a few minutes with the cloak and plumed hat of her young lady, in which she carefully enveloped her, and ere another quarter of an hour had passed the *cortège* was on its way to the railway station, which was the first stage on their route to the great metropolis.

Her last words on leaving her domain were to her favourite gamekeeper, Edgar Ponsford:

"Edgar, you will take care my orders are carefully carried out."

"About the wounded doe and her young, my lady? Yes, certainly, I shall not fail."

With a deferential lifting of the cap Edgar returned to the tasteful dwelling and the pretty wife who awaited his entrance to serve a luxurious enough dinner.

"What's that's her. Is it any use to get introduced, I wonder?" asked a rising politician, whose Parliamentary career was already inspiring his ambitious hopes.

"That's more than any fellow can say," was the drawing reply. "In the first place you'd have to find some one who has the right to make the presentation, and in the next the pluck and the ability to make any use of it. A countess with forty thousand a year, under twenty, and a beauty, is not so easily approached; and, besides, I see Fitzurse is already in the field. He has scarcely left her all night," continued Mr. Willoughby, coolly directing his glass to the opera box where the Countess of Mont Sorell was seated, like a queen on her throne.

"Fitzurse is getting old. Daresay close on thirty," remonstrated the twenty-two-year-old aspirant.

"And has wisely waited till he is next heir to a dukedom before throwing himself away. You can't do better than imitate his example, my good fellow," responded his friend.

"Yet she is such a splendid creature, one hardly fancies a man having the cheek to make up to her," resumed young LeStrange, gazing in admiration at the beautiful girl whose natural charms were set off by every brilliancy of dress and jewels that wealth could purchase; "she'd set any one in a blaze."

"You're about right, and, if report speaks true, she's something like the plague that preceded the fire, she clears the road to unlooked-for promotion for hopeless cadets," said Mr. Willoughby, significantly.

"What on earth do you mean?" asked the younger man, in astonishment.

"Can't explain farther. Truth's a libel, you know; but a word to the wise should be sufficient, and Fitzurse is not the first heir to the dukedom of St. Maur who has fallen a victim to this fair one's attractions. Thank Heaven, I'm out of all danger," returned Mr. Willoughby. "I have passed the thirty years you despise so scornfully, but I was never more content with the immunity it gives against those flaming darts so liberally thrown out from your box."

Mr. Willoughby was right. Estelle's proud head was gracefully bent forward to take a survey of the house during the pause between the acts, and her splendid eyes flashed and her lips smiled as bewitchingly as if without meaning or anticipation she cast herself into the glad present and carelessly claimed the homage belonging to youth and rank and beauty.

She saw opera glasses directed to her box, she could perceive whispers passing between the spectators, and she knew full well that it needed but a word on her part to place a dual coronet within her grasp, and only awaiting its place on her fair brow for the inevitable law of nature and death.

Did it ever occur to her that Pauline Lovett was once at the same height of human pride and grandeur, and fell like a rocket to the depths of disgrace and misery? If it did the thought was carefully crushed back in her heart's lowest recess, to gnaw in secrecy and silence at its vitals.

The opera was over and the languid and exhausted Lady Claud had retired to the back of the box in order to obtain some brief repose while the ballet went on in the giddy whirl.

Otho Fitzurse alone remained of the aspirants to the favour of the countess who had swarmed to the box, and for some minutes there was silence between them which was first broken by the captain's low, deep tones.

"Lady Mont Sorell, it is far better in my opinion to settle matters without all the formality of a private interview, and gossiping domestics to comment on its meaning," he said, bending forward to the edge of the box; "and, as this opportunity seems actually thrown at us, I would press once more the question I once had the presumption to ask. Are you willing to grant to me the fair hand which was once promised to my unlucky cousin, and to make the heritage I have in prospect doubly valuable by the boon?"

Otho was adroit enough for any diplomatist in the allusions he thus introduced while pleading thus briefly his cause, and Estelle writhed secretly under the memories thus called up.

"It is rather an abrupt question and a singular place to press it, Captain Fitzurse," she said, half withdrawing behind the heavy box curtains.

"It is not a new one, Lady Mont Sorell, and I do you the justice not to confound you with a foolish schoolgirl who requires all the formality of a rapturous love-making each time a lover anxiously presses his suit," he returned, with undaunted firmness. "I speak to a high-born maiden who knows how to preserve the dignity of her position as well as demand its rightful homage."

"Suppose I answered in the negative?" she asked, half bitterly.

"I should be too proud to betray half the sorrow it would inflict, but I might possibly try to share it with some one else," he added, meaningly.

"Supposing I were silly enough to consent," she resumed, veiling her annoyance under a forced archness of smiles.

"I would request that the folly should be completed without delay, and exult in the pride of presenting my fair prize to the whole world in all the prestige that I could devise for such a bridal. Estelle, I know you would not trifle with me even by suggesting the possibility of your acceptance unless you intended to complete the hopes thus raised. Be noble and speak the yes, ere it is too late to give time for all else I would wish to say."

"You are tolerably persistent, but I suppose it must be as you will," she replied, half-impulsively.

"Yet it may seem strange to any one who landed—I mean who had heard—"

"That Julian shared the general fate of all who behold you, and gave himself up to your charms?" he interrupted. "By no means, Estelle. It will but serve to exonerate you from the faintest shadow of blame. The duke and duchess are most anxious for the success of my suit," he added, eagerly. "They wish to have their desolate home enlivened by the presence of one who was to have been their daughter on their return home, though their recent affliction would prevent their being at the actual bridal. May I promise them this, Estelle, and at once begin the preparations they have empowered me to make for your suitable reception?"

It was a glittering bait, for Estelle well comprehended its full meaning. Visions of brilliant, priceless jewels, of gorgeous saloons, of retainers well nigh formidable in number and in state, flitted before her brain. Her own coronet, her own possessions paled before the glowing colours of the picture thus conjured up before her.

"It is too abrupt, too sudden," she faltered. "When will they arrive—I mean the duke and duchess?"

"In July, I believe, or perhaps early in August. Surely six weeks are abundant time for preparation," he replied. "Wealth and energy can accomplish far greater wonders than that."

"Six weeks!" she faltered once again. "Impossible!"

"By no means, *bellesœur*. Lady Alice will, I know, be delighted to do all in her power to assist you in the preparations as Lady Claud is so delicate, and my whole soul will be thrown into the work. Fear nothing, loveliest Estelle, save that facile temperament which risks all by daring nothing."

The girl looked sharply at him.

What did that mean, those strange, ominous words? But he looked so perfectly imperious and calm that she could not suppose there was any hidden meaning, and secretly upbraided the weakness that could find foes in every sight and sound and word.

"I will see," she said; "I must consult Lady Claud, and if she do not object I will try to accomplish the feat, if it is to be—"

"Done," supplied the daring suitor. "Fairer countess, believe me, you shall not repent your gracious goodness. To-morrow I shall have the honour of waiting on Lady Claud as your accepted suitor, and I know you will prepare the way for a speedy arrangement without troubling her with details."

The loud applause that now broke on the house as the curtain fell warned them that their colloquy had already lasted an unreasonable time, and even Estelle's inexperience comprehended that either by accident or design she was compromised in the eyes

of the brilliant audience, who must have watched the prolonged dialogue.

Still it was no dreadful fate to be condemned to a dual coronet and a handsome rent roll, with a fashionable and admired husband as its accompaniment, so the young countess made a virtue of necessity and accepted Otho's arm with the stately grace habitual to her without betraying by word or look the real mortification and repugnance the bondage cost her, and Otho, as he turned from handing the ladies into their carriage, took his rapid way in a direction quite contrary to the stream of friends and acquaintances.

The triumph was complete. He had won the great prize of the season on his own terms, forced the proud countess to yield to every condition, while love was as absent from her heart as from his own. Yet as he walked rapidly on there was a dark frown on his brow and a cold, foreboding weight on his breast.

"I love her not; nay, I hate and despise her heartless pride," he muttered. "Beautiful and gifted as she is, I could as soon give my heart to a Lucrezia Borgia as to herself. No, that unhappy, lovely girl who won on me so strangely was far more dear to my very soul as well as sense. There was a womanly pride, a lovely fascination in her every look and tone that captivated me at once. Pauline, Pauline, had I met with you sooner, and had you been in a rank for me to wed, I might have been a different man. But it is too late, and henceforth I am the plighted bridegroom of a coronet and forty thousand a year. No bad step-gap till my old relative makes way for me to my own inheritance. Yes, it is enough, one would say, for any man; but I suppose every man has his weak point, and that poor, helpless little girl hit mine most tremendously. Pah! it's madness even to think of her. Of course it is all done for, and I shall never set eyes on the pretty little sinner again."

CHAPTER XLVI.

My grief is strong; I did thee wrong,
And scorned thy treasures falling.
But sorrow comes too late, another day is
Gone.

Five minutes, pass, may better fate
Attend to-morrow morn.

"PLEASE, my lady, there is a messenger from The Towers waiting for an answer to this packet," said May Austin, Lady Mont Sorell's maid, ere Estelle well opened her eyes on the following morning. "Here it is, my lady."

She presented her lady with a letter on a silver salver splendidly engraved with the family arms, which seemed in strange contrast with the rather rudo-looking epistle which it bore on its glittering surface.

"Leave me, May; I will ring when I want you," she said, after a rapid glance at the direction.

The maid obeyed, with some curiosity as to the contents of a letter so evidently mysterious in its urgency and yet so completely plebeian in its whole getting up and appearance. But she dared not even linger at the door for the chance of catching a sound that would enlighten her as to its nature, and she consoled herself as she bent mightily to the attentions of her sworn admirer, the under butler, at the servants' hall breakfast.

Meanwhile Estelle opened the packet with a trembling hand, and her eye quickly darted first to the signature then the contents of the brief epistle. It was signed "Your humble servant, EDGAR PONSFORD," and ran thus:

"NOBLE LADY,—I have done my utmost to carry out your orders and wishes, though scarcely with as much success as I could desire. The mystery of the disguised mine is still undiscovered, though I think there could be no chance of escape save by a miracle for its hero, and I have skilful and trusty agents who will know how to supply any deficiency should danger arise from any unexpected failure."

"As to the illness of Mrs. Lovett, I have found it so serious that I thought it better to take charge of her myself, and she is now under the care of an experienced attendant in such maladies. The medicine was duly repeated at proper intervals, but it does not seem to produce the desired effect as rapidly as we could wish, though it decidedly alleviates the malady. I would request your ladyship's further orders in the matter, and also some token of your approval of my poor endeavours to meet in all respects your wishes."

"Louise is as ever devoted to your ladyship's service, and I am, madam."

"Your ladyship's humble and true servant."

Such was the enigmatical letter that brought a thrill to Estelle's breast and a bewildering mist over her brain. She comprehended its allusions but too well. She knew that on the wisdom and success of her own and her emissary's proceedings the whole of her future life must turn.

One false step might precipitate her into a most deep and hopeless abyss of ruin and misery. Yet all

promised for success, she seemed on the road to the very height of her ambition, the pinnacle of the loftiest greatness she could possibly aim to achieve in the world.

"It is too late to hesitate now," she thought. "At any rate I must make my position good—yes, at any cost it must be maintained. Cost of money, cost of innocence, ay, of freedom itself. I could not endure the disgrace that might await me, and why should I?" she added, fiercely. "It was no fault of mine. It was unsought by me. I will not suffer for others' crime and folly."

Al, Estelle De Vesel, that thought never occurred to you when Pauline, in utter innocence and unconsciousness, was hurled from the heights of happiness and rank to penury and disgrace.

It was not long ere Estelle decided on her course. She sprang from her couch, and, hastily thrusting her feet into swansdown slippers and drawing a cashmere wrap over her nightdress, she went to a small cabinet that stood in her room, and, unlatching it, drew from one of its recesses a bank-note of some considerable value, and a small ring case, which, on opening, displayed a glittering diamond ring in its velvet bed.

"There," she thought, "they will at once reward and stimulate. I know Louise coveted that ring; but I would not understand her daring hints. Now it is different; no price is too much to pay for the secrecy and service that are in their power."

She passed into her dressing-room, and penned a few hasty but all-important lines. She folded the note and the case in a thick sheet of paper, carefully sealed it at both ends, and directed it to Edgar Ponsford in her usual firm, bold characters.

There was no trace of the trembling that might well have shaken that hand as it penned the lines which that packet contained, and the voice which gave the final directions to May on her reappearance was haughty and cold as usual in its tone.

"Let the messenger start immediately with that packet," she said. "It is of great importance what Ponsford wished to learn, and there must be no delay. Give it him, then come back to me. I must dress at once."

The door closed behind the girl.

Did Estelle hastily move towards the door to recall the messenger? Was her white hand extended to the handle of the lock to change the peremptory mandate?

If so the hesitation passed, the cold shiver of the limbs subsided, the head was raised once again in haughty defiance, and when May returned any passing suspicion must have been lulled by the careless, lounging attitude which her young lady had assumed as she turned over the leaves of a new novel.

"May, be careful in dressing my hair this morning, and give me the black and scarlet costume for my breakfast dress," she said. "I shall probably have early visitors to-day."

The *soûfflé* was put on her mantle, and certainly did her very best to win praise for her lady and herself. The satin folds of the hair were arranged in the most tasteful and irreproachable ease. A careless yet artfully devised head-dress of black and scarlet was secured on the clustering braids by pins of black pearls and jet, and the exquisite morning dress to which Estelle had referred was the very perfection of good taste for the beautiful brunette's toilet.

Never perhaps had the young countess looked more lovely than when this simple breakfast attire was at length complete. The agitation of the morning had given to her faultless features the only charm they lacked, that of varying feminine emotions.

When the roll of a carriage to the door and the loud ring at the hall bell announced guests she actually flushed like any country girl at the advent of some grand squire's dame.

"Lady Alice Vernon, my lady, and Captain Fitznurse, are in the small drawing-room," said the groom of the chambers. "I understood your orders were to admit them this morning."

"Certainly," she replied, calmly. "But I am not at home to any one else, remember."

And without a moment's delay she walked from the apartment to the saloon where her guests awaited her.

Lady Alice was perhaps a shade colder and more reserved in her manner than might have befitted the occasion, when her nephew had secured so splendid a prize to complete the wealth and honours of the family in which he had come to hold so exalted a position.

But Estelle either did not notice or did not heed the somewhat chilling reserve of the lady's manner. Her own demeanour was of at least answering pride and dignity, and Otho was somewhat in the embarrassing position of a neutral between two opposing combatants.

"Is that your little girl, Lady Alice?" asked Estelle as by way perhaps of relieving the awkwardness.

Otho called his little cousin towards him, and began to show her some of the portraits in an album on the table.

"No, a niece, but almost in the same relation to me as to care and guardianship," said the lady. "Julia is an orphan, and I have adopted her almost as a child of my own. It is very seldom that she is allowed to come out with me, but Otho was very anxious that she should make acquaintance with you, Lady Mont Sorell. He spoils her sadly, and I suppose thinks that you may do the same in future for his sake."

It was a tacit recognition of the future relationship between them, and Estelle gave a slight smile and very becoming blush at the allusion, and Lady Alice went on.

"It must be a great satisfaction to all Otho's family, countess, that he should be honoured by your acceptance of his suit. It will be my pleasant office to stand in the place of the Duchess of St. Maur, and endeavour in every way in my power to arrange as she would have done for the happiness and honour of the wife of the heir to her husband."

Estelle bowed with a kind of haughty grace. She knew well that the words were but conventional, and she cared little save to preserve her own proud position and obtain every homage and prestige that is demanded in the eyes of the world.

"So far as more substantial and masculine affairs go," resumed Lady Alice, "I know but little and care less. Of course, the duke will give proper instructions to his solicitor for the requisite settlements, and Otho and your family solicitor will manage all between them. Lady Claud I daresay will be as thankful as myself to escape such formidable matters."

"My mother is a confirmed invalid, Lady Alice. She has indeed not yet left her apartments. But she will gladly return your kind visit, and talk over these tiresome business matters with you. I wash my hands of them," she added, with a pretty, expressive gesture. "It is enough for me to order more feminine necessities on so tremendous an occasion, and—"

"Oh, Otho, Cousin Otho, do look, here is Pauline, dear, dear Pauline," exclaimed Julia, eagerly, as she turned over the album leaves with all the eager curiosity of childhood; "only she is so prettily dressed and she looks so happy. Is it not Pauline, dear Otho?"

And she pulled her cousin's head down almost to a level with her own, till his face was utterly concealed.

"Nonsense, Julia, do not be so silly. You are always talking such nonsense about Miss Lovett. It is a little like her, but it is impossible," returned the young man, in a low voice, which he hoped might be inaudible to the bystanders.

"No, it is her—I am sure of it. No one else could be so pretty," persisted the child.

"Pooh, pooh. There is a pretty lady there, Julia. Is she not quite as pretty as your favourite?" he asked, glancing at Estelle; "you must love her, because she is to be your cousin," he argued as the child shrunk back in evident disinclination for any nearer acquaintance.

"No, she is not pretty—I mean not like Pauline," she said, audibly. "Please do not ask me to love her, Cousin Otho."

"Come here, Julia. Do not be so wild and rude. Otho, you really must not spoil her so terribly," exclaimed Lady Alice, angrily. "Pray, Lady Mont Sorell, forgive her; she is so young she does not know what she is talking about."

"She is a sweet child," said Estelle, with a strange smile. "Will you not come and make friends with me, Julia dear, and tell me who this pretty Pauline of yours was like?"

The child looked doubtfully at her aunt.

Lady Alice confirmed by a peremptory gesture the request of the countess, and Julia slowly and reluctantly obeyed.

"Come, show me the picture you think Pauline was like," continued Estelle, coaxingly, as the little girl approached.

The child willingly complied with what was perhaps about the only request she would have found congenial to her tastes, and bounding back to the table she seized the album and carried it to the sofa where Estelle sat.

"See, there she is," exclaimed the little creature, "only I think I like her better as she is now than in that gay dress."

Estelle glanced sharply at the *carte* in question, and her lips quivered as she recognized the countess. It was a *carte* of Pauline, whilome Countess of Mont Sorell, which had been by some inadvertence left in a half-forgotten album.

The sweet face looked bright and lovely in its youthful bloom, with its simple but tasteful attire, its joyous smile, and sunny golden hair.

Estelle's heart felt an irrepressible pang as she gazed upon the features, that she had just seen wan and pale in deep though nobly borne anguish, and remembered the days of early companionship, the love, the sweetness, the generous kindness and self-abnegation of that unhappy girl.

But she crushed back the involuntary pang, and smilingly questioned Julia as to the place where she had seen the lady like the picture.

"Oh, she was my governess, and I loved her so much; and Otho loved her too, for he wanted to kiss her, and said she was so pretty," replied the child, innocently.

"Julia, be quiet. Come here this moment, and do not speak again. I am sadly ashamed of you, and you must be punished for your naughtiness when we go home," said Lady Alice, severely; though her eyes turned with a bitter reproach rather on her nephew than her little niece.

"Nay, I must defend poor little Julia," said Captain Fitznurse, coolly. "It was a jest—to amuse her—that she alludes to, though I daresay, in her childish innocence, she supposed it was in earnest; and to do Miss Lovett justice she recanted the harmless nonsense as severely as you are reproving Julia. Lady Mont Sorell will think us all extremely absurd; I am afraid," he added, impatiently. "Perhaps she will settle this vexed question by enlightening us as to the original of the portrait?"

It was Estelle's turn to hesitate now.

"It has painful associations," she said; "and the *carte* ought to have been destroyed long since. It is the likeness of the unfortunate impostor who for so many years was supposed to be the Countess of Mont Sorell, and Lady Claud, I suppose, has by some inadvertence kept it in the album which belongs to her."

Lady Alice held out her hand eagerly for the book. The resemblance of name was singular enough to awaken curiosity as to the features. And an examination of astonishment burst from her lips as she saw the striking resemblance to her disgraced governess—Pauline Lovett.

"Might I ask what name this unlucky young woman bore when stripped of her borrowed honours, Lady Mont Sorell?" she asked, constrainedly.

"Lovett—Pauline Lovett! Is it possible you can have come in contact with her, Lady Alice?" asked Estelle, anxiously.

"Certainly. She was introduced to me in a very remarkable manner," returned Lady Alice; "and I had the imprudence to engage her without proper reference, so that it ended in my suffering the deserved punishment of finding she was a worthless, unprincipled young woman. But I might have expected it from an impostor such as you describe, Lady Mont Sorell."

"May I ask of whom you are speaking?" said a soft, gentle voice, that yet had a touch of indignation in its sweetness. "Pardon me, Lady Alice," said Lady Claud De Vesel, advancing into the room, "but I feel so strongly on the subject to which you allude that I allowed my courtesy to give way for a moment."

And she held out her hand with a sweet, deprecating smile to Lady Alice as she placed herself near her.

"I am grieved to have anything to say which would hurt your feelings, Lady Claud," said the visitor, gently, won in spite of herself by the delicate, pensive mother of Estelle. "We will drop the subject if you please, since it is a painful one to all of us."

"No, no—let me hear all," said the Lady Claud, sadly. "I have long lost sight of the poor, brave, noble girl; she was too unselfish to allow her sorrows to burden my heart. Where is she now? Have you dismissed her from your household, Lady Alice, and for what reason?" she added, pleading with her eyes as much as her lips for an answer.

"Because she turned out to be one of the worst of characters," Lady Claud, returned Lady Alice, sternly, for her pride was somewhat piqued at the implied blame. "Pauline Lovett was arrested, as a thief, or, at the least, the receiver of stolen goods, and even is suspected of deeper crimes; I believe indeed that she has been committed and condemned, but I never read those dreadful law reports, so I really cannot say absolutely what her fate was."

"It is false! a cruel, base falsehood!" burst from the trembling lips of Lady Claud. "My innocent, noble Pauline is as incapable as myself of such crime, and if there has been a conspiracy to condemn her it will be visited on the heads of its authors. Estelle, why do you not speak? You knew and loved Pauline for long years, you must know the charge is false."

"Pray, mamma, do not excite yourself. It is really a terrible nuisance for Lady Alice to hear all this," said Estelle, angrily. "These family troubles can have no possible interest for her; and, as to this unfortunate girl, it is impossible to say what effect her

low origin may have had on her conduct when she got among her real relations. I never wish to hear her name again for my part."

"May I ask what she is supposed to have stolen, Lady Alice?" asked the mother of Estelle, with forced composure.

"Some splendid jewels, I believe, which are connected with a murder," returned Lady Alice. "But really, my dear Lady Claud, I think your daughter is right, and that you ought not to injure your peace by dwelling on such a painful subject. Happily your daughter will prove in every way an honour to her race, and I am here this morning to express the pleasure and pride of the noble family in which she is about to enter at the alliance. May I ask for a few moments in private with you, to speak of some necessary preliminaries?" she continued, glancing at the captain and Estelle with a smile.

Lady Claud was about to rise, but Otho forestalled the movement by giving his arm to Estelle, and leading her into an adjoining conservatory, of which he closed the door with a careless laugh.

"We must shut out the eyes and ears of my little gossiping cousin," he remarked, coolly. "Estelle, of course you do not attach the slightest importance to the silly nonsense she told?"

"I cannot tell. I presume she does not tell falsehoods," said Estelle, haughtily. "I would warn you not to attempt to trifle with or deceive me, Captain Fitzurse. I am no love-sick girl to demand first love and sentimental nonsense as an essential of happiness; but I would not pardon treachery to me after we are betrothed—no, not if I discovered it at the altar rails!"

"Do not agitate yourself with any such idea, lovely countess," returned the young man, coolly. "No—blessed oblige, you know, and, as my aunt says, you are doing me and mine too much honour for me to venture on any such folly. The absurdities of Otho Fitzurse must be forgotten by the heir of St. Maur and bridegroom of the fair Countess of Mont Sorell!"

He bent down and touched her cheek with his lips as he passed a brilliant ring on her finger, and the tacit acceptance of the pledge cemented the betrothal of hands, albeit the hearts might have had little share in the transaction.

(To be continued.)

PAVED WITH GOLD.—120,000 square feet of land on the Moulton Viaduct have been let upon a building lease for 15,000l. per annum.

THE LATE MISS READ'S FURNITURE.—The furniture and effects of the late Miss Read, "the eccentric old lady of Stamford Street," have been sold by auction. They comprised rare and antique jewellery, antique chests of drawers, etc., and about 200 ounces of plate of the periods of Queen Anne and Georges I., II., and III.

THE AUTUMN MANOEUVRES.—The Militia regiments selected to take part in the autumn manoeuvres are: Royal South Down, strength, all ranks, 550; Kilkenny Fusiliers, 500; 1st West York Rifles, 650; South Gloucester Light Infantry, 550; 2nd King's Own Stafford Light Infantry, 650; 2nd Royal Middlesex Rifles, 480; Royal Aberdeenshire Highlanders, 480; 3rd Royal Lancashire, 650—total of all ranks, 4,510. The 1st West York, the 3rd Lancashire, the South Down, and Kilkenny Fusiliers will leave their head-quarters so as to arrive at Blandford on the 15th or 16th of August. The remaining regiments will arrive at Aldershot during the week ending the 10th of August. The camp will be formed on the 31st of August preparatory to the commencement of the manoeuvres, which will conclude on Thursday with a march past, after which the Militia will return as soon as possible to their county head-quarters. Regiments will consist of eight companies, with three field officers, 18 commissioned officers, one adjutant, one quartermaster, two medical officers. Officers from other Militia regiments may, if necessary, volunteer to complete this number. Each battalion will have an efficient quartermaster, and it is desirable that he should be mounted. In the event of an officer being recommended to perform the duty of quartermaster he must be attached to a regiment of the line to learn his duties. Only those of the permanent staff-sergeants that are fit for marching will accompany their regiments. Their knapsacks will be carried for them. Commanding officers are to endeavour to fill up vacancies by obtaining volunteers from the permanent staff of other regiments, who will receive 6d. per day extra. There should be not less than three sergeants to each company, inclusive of the permanent staff. If the number is incomplete application may be made for assistance from the army. Weakly or sickly men are not to be brought to the camp, nor women nor children. Forty-five rounds per man blank ammunition will be issued. Officers will receive field allowance at the following rates: 2s. 6d. for

field officers, 1s. 6d. for captains, 1s. for subalterns; commencing on the day on which they encamp. Field rations at 5d. per man will be issued. The ordinary ration consists of 1lb. of bread or biscuits, 1lb. of meat, fresh or salt; after September 5th, 1lb. of cheese when deemed necessary and ordered by officers commanding divisions for men on outlying pickets; and as groceries, 1lb. of bread, 1oz. tea, 2oz. sugar, 1oz. salt, 1-8th pepper. Forage ration will be 14lb. of oats and 8lb. of hay. Straw will not be issued for soldiers' bedding or for horses. Vegetables, milk, butter, etc., will not be issued, but may be purchased from the camp sutlers. Each man is to carry with him haversack, great-coat, knapsack, containing one shirt, one pair socks, one towel, knife, fork, spoon, comb, two brushes, grease or blacking, housewife, sponge, forage cap, and extra trousers. A supply of boots as a reserve store will be carried by the Control Department. Field officers are allowed 80lb. of baggage, other mounted officers 60lb., other officers 40lb., including bedding; one tent for each commanding officer, one for two field officers, three for the regimental staff officers, and one for every three other officers, one for the staff sergeants, and one to every 12 sergeants, buglers, rank and file. Eight waterproof sheets per tent in lieu of straw.

ADA ARGYLE.

CHAPTER XLII.

THAT the Blenheim had proved to be very wealthy people, that the invalid son had died, and that the grateful mother had insisted on transferring his fortune to his preserver, Mrs. Argyle now heard for the first time with great amazement.

"And Ada knows nothing of all this?" she asked.

"Not a word."

"You have, indeed, kept your secret well; but I suppose you do not need to be told that, without the prestige of wealth, you have won my dear daughter's heart."

"If I have indeed gained that inestimable treasure," exclaimed the young man, excitedly, "pray, my dear madam, let me hear you approve the title."

"It would have been better to have asked my approbation of your suit a little earlier," replied the mother, with mock severity.

"But consider," returned Rashleigh, eagerly, "that I was in your daughter's company constantly for a full week before I scarcely knew that she had a mother; remember that I have loved her from the first hour that we met; think what I have suffered since I learnt that she was engaged—and engaged to a man unworthy of her love!"

"Yes, yes—that he was. But how did you know it?"

"Why, from your son."

"Oh, Tom is in the plot, then, is he?" asked Mrs. Argyle. "Perhaps you correspond with him?"

"No—but—"

"Perhaps he sought you to tell you of the quarrel with Walsingham?"

"He did not. He knew nothing of my love for Ada—he was astonished to hear of it."

"Well, well! I should not quarrel with him if he had done so. And, as to you, I shall leave it entirely to Ada herself to say whether you are to be forgiven. So you may call here at three o'clock this afternoon and receive your sentence from her."

Rashleigh's cup of joy was full.

He scarcely attempted to speak his gratitude, but he raised the hand of the old lady to his lips, and, after brief adieus, took his departure.

"He is really a charming fellow," said the old lady, in soliloquy, when he had gone. "I do not wonder that Ada likes him."

Then, as the remembrance of the stately banker occurred to her—the man whose whims she had so long been obliged to consult, whom she had so bowed down to, and who, after all, had treated her and dear Ada with such arrogance and indignity—she exulted in the thought of humbling him, and the words of the taunting monarch coming to her mind, she could not refrain from ejaculating:

"Off with his head! So much for Walsingham!"

Mrs. Argyle was fond of getting up agreeable surprises, and as she had kept Tom's tidings from her daughters so she had also managed to prevent Ada knowing anything of her interview with Mr. Rashleigh.

After dinner she said to her daughter:

"Now, Ada, I have ordered a new doctor for you, for I do not think old Doctor Wilder quite understands your case."

"A new doctor? Why, surely, that was not necessary. I am not so very ill," replied the wondering daughter.

"No; but these severe headaches, and this loss of appetite, are bad symptoms; then there is your extreme nervousness, too! Why, you start and tremble if one does but speak to you."

"Oh, that is nothing, mother—only weakness."

"Well, I do not like it. It might lead to something serious."

"I hope it isn't Doctor Sangrado, as Tom calls him—the man who bleeds all his patients."

"Well, they all do that, literally or figuratively," returned the mother. "But no, it is not Barton. This is a new man. He has been very highly recommended to me, and he is to call precisely at three o'clock. I will put the room in a little better order, and if you wish to dress a little I will assist you at that."

"Never mind the room, mother; I am quite able to go downstairs, and I can see the doctor in the back parlour. It will be warm enough there."

"So you can. Then, let us see—what will you wear? You ought to look your best before strangers."

Ada thought her nice chintz wrapper quite good enough for the purpose—and so it was; and when her beautiful hair was brushed, and some little ornaments were put on, her pale, sweet face was as charming as it could have been rendered by the most elaborate dress.

When the parlour clock struck three its sound mingled with that of the front-door bell, and Mrs. Argyle herself admitted her punctual visitor, and ushered him into the drawing-room before any one else had an opportunity to see him.

There she informed him of her little plot, then from the foot of the stairs she called the patient, who came quite unobtrusively into the presence of her lover, followed by the pleased mother.

"There he is, Ada!" she exclaimed, laughing; "Doctor Sangrado Rashleigh! You will find he understands your case exactly. I will leave you with him for a few minutes, after which I shall return to hear what he prescribes, and whether he thinks there are any hopes of your recovery."

The old lady sought to withdraw as she said this, but Ada, trembling very much, caught her as she was passing out, and said:

"Oh, dear mother! Pray tell me what all this means."

"It means, Ada—there, do not be so foolish and look so frightened—it means that this young man wants to be your husband; and that you want to be his wife; and that I have given my consent, and everything is settled. There, take her, Mr. Rashleigh; she clings to me like a burr."

Fred approached to obey this command, but Ada fled to the sofa and hid her face in her hands, and Mrs. Argyle sensibly left them to make their own explanations.

Of the interview which ensued we shall not venture to speak farther than to say that Rashleigh had now no difficulty—except that interposed by the barrier of modesty—in winning from the beautiful girl a full confession of her love for him and of her willingness to unite her life destinies with his.

How happy they both were it is needless to say; and no true lover need be informed that Ada's great bliss was not materially enhanced in that ecstatic hour by learning—as she then did for the first time—that Rashleigh was a man of wealth.

It required after-hours of more sober thought to convince her that this was a circumstance of any real importance.

In the evening Mr. Walsingham called, and being admitted to an interview with Mrs. Argyle, he condescendingly expressed his intention of forgiving Ada unconditionally in consideration of her illness, and begged that the fact might be at once communicated to her to save her from farther anxiety and distress of mind.

No words can portray his amazement, and his evident and unutterable humiliation, on being told that Ada declined any farther communication with him, and that he must consider their engagement at an end.

The old lady imparted this information as respectfully as possible, for he was still a great man to her, and he was the family lawyer; but she confessed, when asked, that she approved and sanctioned her daughter's course.

"She loved you once, Mr. Walsingham," she said, "but you have completely alienated her affections, and I am convinced that she would be miserable as your wife. At any rate nothing can now shake her determination never to become so. Here are a few small packages which she desired me to give you."

His presents!

He fell back from them as if they had been scorpions.

"Let me hope this decision is not final," he said, with an ill attempt at suavity.

"It is final," replied the mother.

"Let me see Ada."

"She will not see you, Mr. Walsingham."

"Do me the favour to ask her, Mrs. Argyle."

The lady went out, but very soon returned, shaking her head.

"Does she say that she cannot see me?"

"No—she says that she will not."

Mortified beyond expression—beyond the power of

concoctment—and angry with himself for having been so forgetful of his dignity as to importune for the reconciliation which he had once rejected, Walsingham walked out of the room with red and glowing face.

Mrs. Argyle followed him with the presents, but he turned rudely from her.

"Throw them into the fire," he said.

And, passing out, he closed the front door behind him with a noise which rang through the house and frightened the timid Ada, who was listening on the upper landing with a vague sort of fear that the imperious man was going to marry her in spite of herself.

"Oh, mother! You have certainly offended him dreadfully," said Arabella, who was no longer in ignorance of the course which events had taken. "He will never come into the house again."

"Let him stay out then," said the old lady; "he is only a sort of polished bear after all."

"But there was no need of being cross to him," replied the elder daughter, who, though smarting under many slights, still looked hopefully forward to ulterior results.

"I was not cross, Arabella. The message was what galled him, not my manner of delivering it."

"I think you might give that watch and jewellery to me, since he will not take them back. Of course Ada will never wear them."

"They shall be sent to the bank to-morrow," replied Ada, with decision.

Three days after these events, Tom Argyle came home, bringing with him a letter from Mrs. Blenheim to Rashleigh, which the bearer had been charged not to deliver unless the latter had been successful in his wooing, for the considerate lady would not run the risk of adding anything to Frederick's cause for regret if he had failed.

The letter was, of course, delivered, and Tom, who was in inexpressible ecstasies at the changed state of affairs, told the substance of it before the envelope could be opened.

"She wants Ada to go abroad with her and you, Fred, to start in June; she won't take no for an answer, and Ada can be married first or not, just as she pleases."

Many explanations followed this announcement, for it was at home, in the presence of the family, that it was made, and Ada looked much pleased at first, but thought that she could not leave her father.

Still foreign travel was a great sensation for her, and the prospect of getting away from home at a time when there would be so much comment on her affairs was a propelling motive more powerful still.

Frederick was importunate—the mother advised it, and even Arabella, who was at first angry and envious, gave her approbation, believing that Ada was her "rock ahead," and could not be too soon got out of the way.

As to Mr. Argyle, it was urged that Ada could be of no actual benefit to him, and she well knew that he was so engrossed with his imaginary pursuits that he seldom welcomed her visits, and often expressed an impatience at being interrupted by them.

The physicians even said that he would be better if left more to himself, and to such quietude and amusements as the institution provided for its other inmates.

So after a few days' discussion it was decided that Ada was to accept Mrs. Blenheim's invitation, but it was also decided, somewhat to Fred's disappointment, that she should not be married until after her return.

She herself was resolute on this point, and Rashleigh submitted gracefully to her behest.

Part of the month which elapsed before the time appointed for the tour Frederick devoted to a visit to his parents, whom he found comfortably re-established in their old home, with little in the external appearance of things to indicate that they had ever left it.

Yet they had by no means returned to their former style of living, for it was evident that a strict economy regulated all their expenditures, and that since they were entirely dependent upon Fred they had resolved to make the burden as light as possible.

This state of things did not satisfy the son, who was full of generous purposes, so he arranged to settle an annuity upon his father equivalent to his former average expenses.

This he could easily do, for he did not mean to lead an extravagant life himself, and his income, inconsiderable as it might now seem to many fast young men, was very large for those days.

Fred insisted on the annuity, which would not only render his parents independent, and would relieve them from the unpleasant necessity of receiving the means of living from time to time directly from his hands, but would provide for them in the contingency of his death.

He also volunteered to lend his father a small capital, whenever he found any promising business

to enter into, for he recognised the impossibility of anybody, not very old or ill, being happy or even contented in idleness, no matter how great one's means, and he was fully resolved to go into some business himself, professional or otherwise, after his education was completed.

The journeys to and brief sojourn in the various places which they visited, the attachment which Mrs. Blenheim formed for the gentle Ada during the intimate intercourse with her which was thus necessitated, and the return of the travellers, satisfied with sight-seeing and ready to own that they had seen no sight in all their journeyings so welcome as the loved shores of their own dear land, all this we will imagine to have been told.

It is indeed disposing quickly of the events of a whole year, yet how many of the past years of our lives seem, in the retrospect, to have been as brief and fitting as the few moments consumed in reading the last half-dozen lines.

A new and great joy awaited Ada on her return, for she was informed of such a decided improvement in her father's mental condition as warranted the belief in his speedy and entire cure.

He had been prostrated for six weeks by severe bodily disease, from which, after his life had been despaired of, he was slowly recovering with very few traces of his old hallucinations remaining.

Alice Winslow was married within a month after the return of the travellers, and it had been arranged that Frederick's and Ada's wedding should follow within a few weeks, in order that Mrs. Blenheim might not be left alone.

But Mr. Argyle's slow and gradual recovery induced Ada to beg for a farther postponement until autumn, by which time it was believed that his cure would be complete and he would be restored to his home and to the management of his affairs.

As yet his physicians would not allow any exciting news to be imparted to him, and he had not even been informed of the breaking off of Ada's engagement with Walsingham, who continued to do his legal business as usual and seemed to have quietly relapsed into his old bachelor habits.

CHAPTER XLII.

AUTUMN came—as all seasons do at last come, however distant they may have seemed to impatient expectants—and the pleasant predictions of Mr. Argyle's friends were fully realized.

He had been restored to his home in sound mind, but not in robust health, and little doubt of the permanence of his sanity was entertained, with reasonable care in the avoidance of causes of strong excitement.

The necessity for this care, or something else in his late sad experience, seemed to have worked a great change in his nature, for he had grown more considerate and affectionate to his family, and especially to Ada, for whom his love seemed very great.

He had before been just and brave and humane, and it needed only these new qualities of gentleness and domestic affection to complete a really noble character, though of course not a faultless one.

How much this change contributed to Ada's happiness may easily be imagined, for her filial love had never failed, even when it encountered the adverse influences of seeming indifference and neglect.

Nor did Argyle lose his vivacity in his altered temperament; he remained the same lively, hilarious man, and he was exceedingly delighted at the prospect of having Fred Rashleigh for his son-in-law, though he kept his views on this subject secret from Walsingham, with whom he continued to maintain business relations.

Strange to say, the subject was never referred to between them, it seemed to be avoided by tacit consent of both parties.

The wedding, long looked forward to, took place—the ceremony being performed in church, and an evening reception followed at the bride's home.

Mrs. Blenheim, Alice and her husband, and all the Rashleigh family were present, and as the friends of the Argyles were numerous there was no lack of guests to honour the occasion, and no lack of festivities to entertain the guests.

Several new matches were supposed to have been made on the occasion, for the rule that one wedding makes more was as true then as now, and even Arabella secured a beau that night, who remained faithful until—marriage—and if he repented leisurely afterwards he kept his own secret.

Perhaps he did not repent, for we believe that many a frivolous, ill-natured girl makes a really good wife and mother.

Joe Congo was very anxious to see something of the wedding party, and as he could not go as a guest he begged to be employed as one of the table-waiters.

This request was, of course, granted, and Joe performed his duties capitally, except when lost

in admiration of the bride, who, he boasted to one of his fellow servants, was an old acquaintance of his, as he had had "the honour of being shipwrecked with her."

What more remains to be told?

Very little which the reader cannot himself conjecture—and the narrator feels that he has no excuse for dwelling much longer upon this history, however pleasant its details may be to himself.

The bride and bridegroom, in compliance with Mrs. Blenheim's most earnest persuasions, made her house their home, Ada being constituted in all respects its mistress, and during the many years through which this arrangement was continued, nothing occurred to mar the perfect harmony of this happy household—not even when questions of government came up, over a little juvenile commonwealth, which brought new joys and new light and life into the once desolate house, for Mrs. Blenheim, ever kind and considerate for others, exacted nothing, and claimed nothing for herself except the privilege of loving and being loved.

Frederick finished his college course, then studied law, and became a partner in an old legal firm, which position gave him facilities for managing his own estate to the best advantage, and introduced him into general practice.

He obtained and maintained a respectable position as an advocate, and would doubtless have risen to eminence if he had felt the necessity of improving his really striking talents, but he suffered his attention to be partly drawn from his profession by his love for the more pleasing pursuits of science and general literature.

He always preserved that strict integrity and those religious principles which were implanted in his heart by early maternal teachings, and were matured in the years of his young manhood; and in his just, charitable, and humane career he ever found a ready and cheerful ally in his loved and loving wife.

Nor did this model son and brother remain many years separated from his parents and sister by that wide interval which divided them in the first years of his married life.

He could not go to them consistently with his duty to his new mother, and with a due attention to his property; but he did not rest until he induced them to take up their residence very near to his own home.

Here Miss Rashleigh found her destiny in the shape of a rising young clergyman, who could not have chosen better if he sought a "helpmeet" in his sacred vocation.

Here David, refusing a late collegiate education, was placed in a warehouse, educated to commercial pursuits, and finally was helped by his brother into a junior partnership in an old mercantile house.

Mr. Argyle preserved his restored reason, and seemed to retain no memory of his old hallucinations.

Fred and Ada, with some toddlers and crows, usually spent part of their summers at his home, where they often met Walsingham, who remained unmarried, and had grown so exceedingly rich that he could afford to look complacently down upon a mere twenty-thousand-pound man encumbered with a family.

He retained no ill-will towards Ada or his successful rival, and was so far from having any sensitiveness on the subject of the broken engagement that he sometimes alluded to it himself as the result of his own folly, and said, playfully, that he would wait now and take one of Ada's daughters.

Congo always came to see Rashleigh during these summer visits, and always reaped a substantial benefit from them; so that, partly from these benefactions and partly by his own and his wife's industry, he attained to the dignity of a real-estate owner, having a nice little cottage and garden of his own.

THE END.

THE actual duration of a flash of lightning does not exceed the millionth part of a second. But the retina of the human eye retains the impression of the electrical flash for a much longer period.

WINNER OF THE PRINCE OF WALES'S CUP.—At the rifle contest at Wimbledon for the Prince of Wales's cup, value 100 guineas, among the Civil Service Volunteers, the cup was won by Corporal Allen, of E Company, who made the good score of 84 points in 10 shots at each of the ranges of 200, 500, and 600 yards.

THE "GLATTON."—The "Glatton" has arrived at Spithead and will be taken in hand by the dockyard officials for the removal of her damaged turret-plates, for a more complete and exhaustive examination into the damage caused by the shots from the "Hotspur's" guns upon the wall of the turret than could be made at Portland, and also for a further examination of the several parts of the mechanical arrangements at the base of the turret. The cost of repairs is estimated at 2,500*l.*, whilst the cost of the

seven shots employed to make the two perforations is about forty-two guineas, irrespective of the powder and shot fired from the "Glatton's" gun to prove the efficiency of the Scott carriage and of turret machinery.

THE MINT.

THE Deputy Master of the Mint has presented a report for the year 1871, stating that the coinage of gold and silver in that year far exceeded the average. The large gold coinage was rendered necessary by withdrawals of specie from the Bank of England, amounting in the last half of the year to more than ten millions sterling, including two millions transmitted to Germany.

The total number of coins struck at the Mint in 1871 was 80,022,404, of the nominal value of 10,580,061*l*. There were no less than 8,767,250 sovereigns struck, 2,062,970 half-sovereigns, 3,425,606 florins, 4,910,010 shillings, 8,562,684 six-pences, 4,627 four-pences, for Maundy money only, 1,004,121 threepences, 1,290,318 pence, and 1,075,260 halfpence.

The demand for coin in 1871 was very great; but apart from its magnitude the gold coinage of 1871 was not marked by any special feature. The amount of light gold received by the Mint for re-coinage was 701,000*l*., almost entirely imported by the Bank of England.

As is well known, silver, when extracted from its ores, contains a small quantity of gold, and it is possible now to extract with profit any quantity of gold exceeding two grains in the pound troy of silver. The half crowns now in process of withdrawal from circulation contain an average of four grains in the pound; and when, therefore, any considerable quantity of these coins has accumulated in the Mint the gold will probably be extracted from them before the silver is recoined.

In regard to the operative department of the Mint the Deputy Master observes that the accuracy of the automatic weighing machines, in which each piece of gold and silver is weighed before it is issued, was severely tested in the large coinages of last year. It may give some idea of the work performed by these machines if we state that the hundredth part of a grain is sufficient to cause a sensible deflection of the beam. The actual loss on coinage was 327*l*., or 60*l*. per million.

The most important change which occurred in 1871 was the introduction of a new coinage of gold into the currency of Germany; but it is regretted that the coinage adopted is objectionable. There are several gold coins, issued or proposed, containing nearly the same quantity of pure gold—the English sovereign 7.32 grammes, the United States half-eagle, or 5-dollar piece, 7.52 grammes, the proposed 25-franc piece 7.26 grammes, and the proposed Spanish piece of 25 pesetas, of equal value with the 25-franc piece, but the German 20-mark piece, containing only 7.16 grammes of pure gold, will be equal to not more than 19*l*. 7*d*. in English money, presenting a farther divergence from the uniformity so much to be desired—and an additional obstacle to the adoption of an international gold coin.

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION IN FRANCE.—Some time ago it was announced that an International Agricultural Exhibition would be held at Mar-le-Duc, in France, in the course of the present year. The Inspector-General of Agriculture in France now intimates that it has been deemed advisable to postpone this proposed exhibition of agricultural implements and machines.

THE PALACE OF THE PRINCESS MATHILDE.—The Emperor's cousin, the Princess Mathilde, is selling off her magnificent palace, by Mr. Kennedy, jun. The bird had incautiously alighted on a trap fastened by a stake; it was caught in the trap by the back talon of the right foot; and, struggling for liberty, carried away trap, stake, and all; for several days before being caught it was seen flying among the hills with the trap and chain attached, but at length it was obliged to yield to the force of circumstances, and descending to the low ground permitted itself to be captured. The talon by which it had been held was nearly, but not wholly, severed from the foot. The bird is little more than a year old, and from this cause the rich golden hue of the plumage is not so well developed as in older specimens. The following are the dimensions of the bird:—From tip to tip of

the outspread wings, nearly 7 feet; from the point of the beak to the tip of the tail, 8 feet; from the foot to the beak when standing, 24½ inches; width across the breast, 12 inches.

LORD DANE'S ERROR.

CHAPTER XIX.

VOLNEY HEATH stood for a moment outside the massive door he had just shut upon his enemy; he stood listening with a curious, half-savage expression on his handsome face.

Vassar, in spite of his lameness, had been after him almost before the door could close. He heard him wrenching at it wildly and uttering furious imprecations. Then he went to the windows, trying each in turn.

Volney heard him, and smiled grimly as he descended the steps and walked away, slowly while in Vassar's sight, more swiftly afterwards.

Vassar made no outcry. No shout followed the steps of his captor. He seemed to realize that it would be of no use. He was fairly caught—trapped like a rabbit—a fate his experience and natural caution should have foreseen and averted.

"No one would hear him a dozen yards off if he shouted himself hoarse," Volney said to himself, with grim exultation; "and, if any one should, he would think it was the ghost of the crazy woman who used to be shut up there."

Instead of returning the way he had come Heath, after glancing at his watch by the light of a match, directed his steps to the west wing, in which Lord Dane lay.

"It must be about the surgeon's hour," he muttered; "and if I should be lucky enough to see him it might be better for this shoulder of mine."

He entered, and, ascertaining by approaching the door of the room in which Lord Dane lay that the surgeon was there, he went and sat down on one of the lower stairs to wait for him.

The doctor came up soon, and by the light of the single lamp which shone like a fire-fly against the wall recognized him with an exclamation.

Heath smiled faintly, and extended his hand. "My lord!" exclaimed the unsuspecting doctor, "you are ill!—there is blood on your clothes! What has happened?"

"It is nothing. A savage dog attacked me—that is all."

Volney showed his mangled shoulder. His lips were white and twitching slightly as he did so, and large drops of moisture stood about the corners of his mouth. The pain had indeed become excruciating. He looked as though he might faint at any moment; but he smiled when the doctor suggested it.

"I'm not one of that sort, doctor. Do whatever is necessary, if you please. I can endure it."

"But I must have help—I must have water and bandages."

"Perdita will come—I mean Mrs. Croft."

Perdita came when summoned, and stayed till the torn shoulder was dressed. An ugly job it was too; but Perdita only whitened a little under the broad frill of her old-woman's cap, and stood resolutely by till all was done.

Volney glanced now and then apprehensively in the direction of his lordship's room, till Perdita quietly showed him the key to that apartment.

The good, credulous surgeon, having accomplished his task of dressing Volney's wounded shoulder, departed.

The men who was to take the night watch with Lord Dane had come, and had gone to his post.

Volney drew Perdita into one of the dusty, deserted saloons of that portion of the hall.

"I am going to run away, Perdita," he said, sitting down on a worm-eaten chair, whose yellow silk cushions were mouldy and tattered. "Sybil's father is here. I met him in the grounds this evening, and I got this in my shoulder from an ugly brute he brought with him—I solemnly believe on purpose to kill me." He paused for a moment. "The dog is dead. The master is safe for a while. I shall leave both him and Lord Dane in your charge."

Perdita started and shook her head vehemently. "Oh, but I shall," he continued; "there is no other way. Vassar threatened to break my marriage. He is shut up in the little house in Crazy Glen—you know it—and there is the key. If you don't let him out he will starve. Sybil and I leave Leueleigh by the morning train."

Perdita's astonishment was evident in her face. Perhaps too she felt a sort of relief at the prospect of some change in the mystery and oppressiveness of her surroundings.

"You can telegraph for Lord Dane's valet, unlock the house in Crazy Glen to-morrow night at dusk, then vanish yourself."

Perdita started a little, her sweet young face whitened, and her heart sank. Vanish? Vanish from Lord Dane?

"Very well, my lord—I mean Volney," she stammered.

But Heath did not notice her confused and faltering voice.

"You will do this?" he asked.

"Yes."

"You have merely to telegraph for Lord Dane's servant—Cheery is his name—and unlock Vassar's door. Then you may go back to Aunt Lucia. Good-bye, little sister. Kiss me good-bye, and say"—he hesitated—"say Heaven bless you, if you can."

Perdita dropped her face upon her hands.

"Heaven does not bless you. It never will in this way," she whispered.

Volney shut his teeth hard.

"You won't say it? Well never mind. I had a little superstition about your saying it for me; but let it go. I haven't any religion but Sybil. That must stand me in place of a better for some time to come, I am afraid."

Thus speaking, with a kind of mocking bitterness, Volney Heath kissed his foster-sister's pretty cheek, and, slipping a small roll in her hands, turned to seek the other side of the mansion.

Perdita sprang after him.

"I am sorry for you, Volney, you know I am," she cried, extending both her hands. "I would do anything for you that I could honestly, and I even did that for which my conscience condemned me when I went to London for you."

"I know, Perdita, sister," said Volney, stopping and pressing both the little hands in his. He remembered suddenly something he had come near forgetting. "I appreciate all the kindness you have done me, believe me," he said. "I will tell you what I am about to do, for I know you will not betray me. I shall go from here to the Continent. We shall stop in Paris till we get a letter from you—that is, I will furnish the letter and you will post it."

"I!" exclaimed Perdita, her small face drooping again with apprehension and disapproval.

At the same time she compressed her red lips with an air of firmness.

"You," resumed Volney. "I will not tell you the contents of this letter, because then your conscience will not oppose you so much in posting it."

Perdita shook her head again, but she smiled faintly.

"You will wait in Paris till you get this letter," she said, "then—"

"Then we will seek some retired spot where tourists will not be likely to meet with us. We will live there undisturbed by fearful forebodings, peaceful, contented, loving each other, and living for each other."

The handsome, pale face of Volney glowed as from an inner radiance as he pictured this rapturous future for himself and Sybil.

"But Sybil, your wife, you have told me she was ambitious and fond of pleasure?" questioned Perdita, in amazement.

"True," and a transient gloom clouded his brow; "yet I think upon the receipt of this letter, which you will post for me the third day after our departure, she will make no objection to that retirement and seclusion which I wish."

"But this letter—what will you say to her in this letter which shall so change her?" Perdita exclaimed, in a sort of fright, for her foster brother spoke in so calm, so assured, so serious, not to any solemn a tone.

"I had better not tell you that. You are but a simple reasoner, Perdita, and might imagine wrong in a very innocent matter."

"Innocent?" repeated Perdita.

"Quite so; it will contain nothing but the truth."

Perdita regarded him with wide, incredulous eyes, and shook her head again.

Volney smiled derisively. "The letter will inform her ladyship of the death of one who is indeed dead to her, and for whom she will feel it necessary to live in ostensible mourning and seclusion for some time."

"Ah!" sighed Perdita, casting down her eyes thoughtfully.

"Will you post my letter, little sister? I sincerely believe it's the last chance you will ever have to do me a kindness, and it is not so much—only a little letter that may pain Sybil somewhat, but not so much as it would to meet her father and learn the truth. Besides, after a time—when she has learned to love me as I do her—I will confess everything, then—"

He paused, gloom settling again on his face like a pall.

"Oh, Volney, what will you do if she should refuse to forgive you then?"

"Do?" Volney answered, with an airy smile and an unnatural gleam in his deep eyes. "There would be only one thing I could do, sister, would there?"

"Oh, Volney, don't talk so; don't look so," and Perdita, whose heart was very sore with its own ache, burst into tears.

"I should not want to live if I lost Sybil. I don't think I could bear to live and know that she hated

me," he said, passionately. "Will you post my letter, Perdita?"

Perdita sobbed again.

"It is not right. I ought not, and you'll regret it yet. But I don't like to refuse you, Volney. Give me the letter."

He had it ready. He gave it to her. Then he kissed her with much agitation, and left her.

Very suddenly, very much to the amazement, dismay, and confusion of the whole Lonsleigh household, the pseudo "lord" and "my lady" departed on the following morning.

They went first to London to Sherwood Terrace, St. John's Wood.

No Vassar was there, of course, but presently Volney produced a letter purporting to be addressed by Vassar to an acquaintance in London, and dated from Paris.

The next morning, at six o'clock, they took tickets for Paris.

By nightfall the vainest wish of Sybil Vassar Heath's foolish young heart was gratified. She was in the city of all vanities. Her father was not there, to be sure, but it was comparatively easy to her husband to put her off with some clever excuse by this time.

Volney laboured her to her heart's content for the brief space he meant to be there. He took magnificent apartments at the Hôtel de Louvre, he gave "my lady" carte blanche as to purchases. An entirely new and wonderful array of habiliments was bought for that half-royal *début* Sybil had resolved upon making here.

Fortunately she was willing to live in comparative seclusion until these were ready—fortunately indeed for Volney, who had spent much time in Paris with the true Lord Dane, and was in constant fear of meeting some one who knew him whenever he and Sybil were outside their own apartments together.

The "countess" desired new and expensive sets of jewellery, the cost of which would have been out drops in the ocean of the true Lord Dane's abundance, but would have seriously invaded the fifty thousand pounds that were the sole fortune of Volney Heath.

But she had her jewels, or thought she had, which was the same thing—to her.

They were only skillful imitations, but she did not know that.

Adèle still remained with her, serviceable and silent, but watching, and adding patiently to her knowledge of the mystery she had partially penetrated before. She hoped when she had once fairly made herself mistress of her master's secret to be able to extract enough money for her silence from Volney to keep her in luxury for the remainder of her days.

CHAPTER XX.

MEANWHILE much of serious import to all our characters had been passing at Lonsleigh.

The dog which Volney had strangled remained on the ground where he had left him.

By some strange chance, for the servants usually avoided that portion of the grounds, one of the men, passing that way the morning but one after, found the dead animal—a startling sight enough to come on unexpectedly, for the dog, besides being of immense size and unusual colour, had died hard, and still showed it in his frightful, protruding eyeballs and tongue.

There were, besides, evident marks of a severe struggle all about in the trampled grass—added to which there was the blood that had dripped from Volney's torn shoulder profusely; and the man, in a stupefied horror, discovered that these traces led off toward what was known as Crazy Glen by some and called the Ghost's Hollow by the more superstitious.

He did not dare go far on that haunted path himself, but he got help, or company rather; for the servants, upon hearing his story, started at once in a body for the Ghost's Hollow, though any one of them would have shrunk from going alone.

They found the little glade, hidden away in its usual quiet and lonely solitude, and bearing no signs of anything serious having occurred within its borders save a crushed grass blade here and there and those red stains leading quite up to the doorway of the ivy-covered prison-house that had been built for the maniac countess.

The door was ajar, and, after slight hesitation, the more venturesome than the rest pushed it open, then darted back with frightened cries.

The curiosity of the others would not let them recede. They crowded in a body through the low doorway, then recoiled in their turn.

It was a ghastly sight indeed upon which they had blundered.

Rupert Vassar would never threaten any one again. He was dead—at the hand of some assassin, too, for he had fallen upon his face with his crutch beside him, and the knife which had done the deed was yet sticking in his back. Half buried amid a mass of coagulated gore.

Nobody dared touch the corpse, though some tried to get a sight of the bruised and purple face, disfigured by the fall.

The room had a close and corpse-like smell; the body of the unfortunate man had evidently been there many hours.

Perdita, indeed, when she came the night before, as had been agreed upon between her and Volney, had discovered it. She had come at dusk, and unlocked the door of the house in Ghost's Hollow. Then she had concealed herself, to watch who came out, for she thought she might some day wish to be able to recognize the father of Sybil.

She waited for some time, but no one came out, and the hour and the scene were so still and awe-inspiring, and the building in which Volney had told her he left Vassar looked so ghostly among the long shadows that surrounded it, that in a sudden terror of she knew not what, and ready to risk anything for the sake of solving that terror, she ran and exerting all her strength pushed the massive door open. The lamp was still burning on the table where Volney had set it, and by its light she beheld the dead and murdered form of the man she had come to set at liberty.

Who had killed him? Was he really dead?

Perdita, though shivering in every limb, satisfied herself of this last fact, like the brave girl she was in any sharp crisis. Then, reasoning with rare thoughtfulness that to make known her discovery might involve her in a painful and embarrassing investigation, one which might end to implicating Volney, if not herself, she fled the scene and vanished that night from Lonsleigh Hall.

On the following morning Lord Dane, having waited for the usual appearance of Mrs. Croft, and finding that she did not come even by noon, declared himself well enough to sit up, and ordered his clothes to be brought him.

No one paid him any attention, for nothing had happened as yet to proclaim to his deceived servants his identity. He was supposed still to be an escaped madman whose keepers might arrive in search of him at any moment.

But Mrs. Croft had telegraphed to Cheeny, the earl's valet, in very emphatic language, and by that night's train Cheeny made his appearance at Lonsleigh Hall and demanded to see his master.

He was informed that Lord Dane had gone, and the countess with him. Cheeny looked mystified at first, but at the mention of the countess he burst out laughing. He was in his master's confidence, and knew the whole story. He pulled out his telegram and examined it. Then he asked if there was not another gentleman now at the hall who called himself Lord Dane.

The butler heard him, and some foreboding of the truth must have crossed him. Indeed he had begun to have some dreadful misgivings for a week past.

But he put a bold face on the matter, and, coming forward, respectfully informed Cheeny that there was at that moment a gentleman, answering the description he gave, lying very ill in one of the hall chambers.

The other servants stared, all but those in the secret.

Peters pompously offered to conduct Cheeny to the invalid's apartment.

Great was Cheeny's amazement as, after traversing the inhabited portion of the hall, which was magnificently fitted up, he came to the neglected west wing in which the earl lay.

Peters, whose terrible suspicions had rapidly changed to painful conviction, would have given much to be able to unlock the door of the earl's apartment without Cheeny seeing him. But that was impossible, and the only reason why Cheeny did not knock him down at once was because his amazement at the sight of the invalid earl at that moment made him forget everything else.

The unlucky steward waited in a horror of stupefaction till the earl and Cheeny had got over the excitement of the first explanations.

Presently Lord Dane looked up and recognized him for the man who had let him in the first night of his arrival at the west portal of the hall, and led the assault of his fellows upon him.

The earl sat up in his bed and looked at the unfortunate steward with scowling and portentous brow.

Peters's ruddy countenance turned yellow with dismay and foreboding, but he stood as ground. Suspicious he had had all along that the injured man was not precisely what the pretended Lord Dane had called him, but nothing like the awful truth had till now penetrated his horrified brain.

This the earl!—this one, whose sacred person he and his fellows had flung rudely down and beaten upon the marble floor of his own ancestral mansion? Who, then, was the other? Who was he who had called himself "lord"? Some abandoned ruffian, doubtless, some low villain.

Lord Dane broke in upon his musings with a jeering and angry laugh:

"Look at him, Cheeny. He called me a madman,

and he and the rest of those idiots here have been toadying my double all this time. Pleasant, wasn't it, for me, the true owner of all, to lie here under lock and key while that rascal sat at my table and drank my wines? However, my lady was not so cruel."

The earl fell back upon his pillow again, laughing, but his lips twitched nervelessly.

"What brought you here, Cheeny?" he demanded, abruptly. "No one knew I came."

"I was telegraphed for, my lord, by a person signing herself Mrs. Crofts."

The earl started.

"Ah," he cried, "that explains all. Here, you rascal," he added, turning to Peters. "Heath went yesterday morning, did he not? I mean the person whom you idiots have been calling Lord Dane?"

"My lord, he left yesterday morning," stammered Peters, abjectly, "and—he took my lady—I mean the person he called Lady Dane—with him."

Lord Dane started up again with angry impetuosity.

"Off with you now and shut the door. See him down the stairs, Cheeny."

The valet rose.

Peters pushed forward into the room.

He wanted some assurance that the rich perquisites and emoluments of his present position were not absolutely lost by his folly.

"If your lordship will be pleased to let me tell you—," he began, with the most abject humility.

"Get out of this room, you villain, or Cheeny shall kick you out!" shouted the earl.

Peters retreated.

The valet followed him.

"Put the handsomest suite of apartments in the house in complete order at once," Cheeny whispered, "and let me know when they're ready."

"Yes, sir."

Peters brightened a little, then hurried away to obey.

Cheeny returned to his master.

"We must follow them," the earl cried, passionately. "I will pursue him to the ends of the earth before he shall have her. I will by—"

"My lord," exclaimed the earl's valet and most confidential man, "I thought—I had supposed that Mr. Heath—"

"You supposed that I had agreed to his plans. So I had so far as I knew them. But there was one feature of them which he carefully concealed from me. He has married the girl whom he knew I loved. He has stolen her from me by a base and deliberate deceit, and he shall not have her."

"My lord, do I understand you? Has not Mr. Heath married the daughter of that Mr. Vassar whom you have so long honoured with your detestation?"

"Yes," said Lord Dane, excitedly; "he has married that girl whom Vassar made me promise to make a Countess of Dane as soon as she was old enough on penalty of being routed from the earldom myself."

"My lord!" cried the servant, looking anxiously at the door.

"Pshaw, there is no one to hear. Better not be speaking too loudly of such matters though, I know. Thanks, Cheeny; you're a good fellow. But about Sybil Vassar. I hated the father and fancied I hated the daughter. She was a mere child when I saw her, and no beauty in my eyes then. But she has developed into a creature of the rarest loveliness. There is not another such a face in England—idiot that I was. No wonder Heath would not permit me to have a glimpse of her at Dane House. But I saw her face unveiled at a window just as the train was starting, and I knew her at once."

"My lord," exclaimed Cheeny, "how could you recognize her? You have never seen Mr. Vassar's daughter but once. She was a child then."

"I have seen her since, but I did not know her. She and the Miss Channing I met at Falkner are one."

Cheeny started violently, and a singular change passed over his face.

"Impossible!" he said, involuntarily, and checked himself.

"Of course," said Lord Dane, "I did not suspect they were the same till I saw her at the window, nor did I then until I tried to get into the carriage where she was, and Heath threw me off the platform. He must have known all the while."

Cheeny was terribly puzzled. He knew that the little girl at Falkner, the Miss Channing in question, was Perdita Lorne, and Perdita Lorne could not be Sybil Vassar.

"My lord," he asked, "has this young lady light or dark hair?"

"It is a dark brown, silky and shining, and her eyes are the same colour."

Cheeny's eyes twinkled and his cheeks flushed a little.

"She has a dark, brilliant face, cheeks and lips deep coloured, and is rather small and slight," he questioned.



[VASSAR MURDERED.]

"To be sure. Why, where did you see her?"
 "I was at Falkner long enough for that," Cheeny answered, quietly.

He was thinking how he could turn this mistake of the earl's—for mistake it was, somehow—to account.

One thing was sure, so long as Lord Dane believed the girl Heath had married to be the one he had known as Miss Channing there would be an end to any friendship between them, and the intriguing valet had always been jealous of that intimacy.

"Mr. Heath must have managed very cleverly," he said.

"Cleverly?" cried his lordship, furious with remembrance of how he had played into Heath's hands. "Why, I gave him fifty thousand pounds in the lump to marry on, and lent him my name, my title, my servants, carriage, town house and country seat. So cleverly that if we ever meet again, and meet we shall, it will be his life or mine. I should like to know what Sybil said when she found out who he was. She thought she was marrying me, that is, she thought she was marrying Lord Dane."

"Perhaps he has not told her any better yet."

"Yes, he has. She knows at any rate; and here is where I am puzzled, Cheeny. There is a mystery about it somewhere that is beyond me. This very girl whom Heath has married as Lord Dane has been my nurse most of the time since I have been shut up in this room."

The man stared at his master as though he thought he had suddenly gone mad indeed.

His lordship smiled rather dolefully.

"It is true, Cheeny, and I am not raving. It was she who telegraphed for you to come—on the eve of her departure with him, it seems," and the earl clenched his teeth.

Cheeny reflected for a moment.

His telegram had been sent that morning, and, according to what he had heard from the servants, Heath and his wife had left on the morning previous.

Who then sent the telegram? Not Heath's wife, but Perdita of course. He had kept himself informed of her movements, and knew she was at Leuseleigh village visiting a so-called aunt. But what he did not know was that she and Heath bore the relationship they did to each other.

Lord Dane turned suddenly toward his valet. "Cheeny," he said, "I would give my earldom this moment to be able to take her from him—entirely."

Cheeny's face flushed.

"My lord, would you give me what you did him to secure her?"

"What—fifty thousand pounds? Yes, and more

too. But they are married. You can't break a marriage, Cheeny, clever as you are. It takes the House of Lords to do that."

"You would not marry her, my lord, now that you have got those papers away from Vassar?"

"I'd marry her this moment, if I could."

"That is another thing," the valet muttered to himself, looking thoughtful.

Suddenly a daring thought crossed him.

"My lord," he said, gravely, "may I change the subject? I was just starting for Leuseleigh when your mysterious Mrs. Croft telegraphed for me. I was not coming on your account, however, for I did not know you were here."

"What were you coming for, then?"

"My lord, did I understand you rightly when I thought you said that you would never sleep soundly again till you knew who that other person, to whom those papers referred, was?"

"Of course," said Lord Dane, regarding him wonderingly. "I have always had my doubts about that other person being in existence after all. Vassar showed me the papers, but he never gave me any satisfaction concerning the mysterious individual to whom they referred."

"I have discovered that individual, my lord."

"You?"

"I."

"How—in Heaven's name? What are you up to, Cheeny?"

"It is a woman, my lord—or rather, a girl—a young girl."

"If you are telling the truth she is just as dangerous to me as a man would be. The earldom and the property are entailed in the female, as well as the male line."

"I know it."

The earl looked startled and somewhat suspicious.

"You must have been at an immense deal of trouble, Cheeny. It is fortunate that I have secured and destroyed those papers, or you might be turning upon me, as Vassar did."

"Those were only copies which you destroyed, my lord. You have been badly imposed upon. Vassar had the real documents less than a week ago. He was at Dane House, and, knowing I was in your confidence, showed them to me."

Cheeny spoke quietly—too much so perhaps, for his master's anger flamed up.

"Scoundrel! and you've gone into league with him?"

"No, my lord."

The earl looked terribly startled.

"The true heiress of Dane—" began Cheeny, deliberately.

Lord Dane interrupted him, his handsome brow nearly meeting in an angry scowl.

"Where is she? Does she know?"

"She is here in Leuseleigh village. She knows nothing, my lord, as yet."

An intense light flashed from the earl's eyes as he looked searchingly at his tranquil valet.

"Here—does she live here? What is her name?"

"Her real name, or the one she is known by at present, my lord?"

"The one she is known by of course."

Cheeny hesitated again before he spoke, but he had a daring scheme on foot, and something must be risked.

"She is called Perdita Lorne," he said.

Lord Dane did not recognise the name. How could he?—he had never in his life heard it before. But he noticed the significance in his valet's tone, and frowned again.

"Well," he said, angrily, "let me hear the rest! You have the best part on your mind still, I am sure."

"My lord, there is no more, unless you please to require my service in the disposal of this young person, who might inconvenience you seriously if she only knew her rights."

Again the significance of Cheeny's tone caused a disagreeable chilly sensation to creep over Lord Dane.

"I don't know what you could do," he said, coldly.

"I cannot well marry her out of your way, having one wife already," the valet said, in a tone of familiarity he had never attempted before.

His master turned towards him sharply.

"You are impertinent, Cheeny. Don't talk of your marrying a girl who is perhaps Countess of Dane in her own right—I won't permit that."

Cheeny whitened, and his black eyes flashed under their downcast lids; but he made no reply.

The earl lay back among his embroidered pillows, a flush, as of fever, in his pale, thin face.

"I will pay you your price to hold your tongue, Cheeny, if you'll tell me what you want, then we'll let the matter rest till I've seen Vassar."

The valet's face contracted slightly, and a curious, ashy look crept round his mouth. He moistened his lips for a moment before he spoke.

"You will never see Mr. Vassar alive, my lord," he said, in a low voice.

"What?"

"Mr. Vassar is dead!"

He tried to look the earl in the face as he said it, but his bold eyes flickered before that steady, intense gaze.

"Dead! Impossible!" the earl muttered.

(To be continued.)



[THE INTERVIEW AT SPA.]

MARIGOLD.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Image in the Heart," "Sweet Eglantine,"
 "The Three Passions," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XV.

Man spurs the worm, but pauses ere he wake
 The slumbering venom of the folded snake.

Byron.

A flood of conflicting emotions swept over Lady Kimbolton's storm-tossed soul. Again she was in the presence of the only man she ever loved. She was married to one whom she detested, but the laws which we all respect—laws both human and divine—told her that she ought to check the slumbering embers which once more threatened to burst into a flame.

But the wayward hearts of poor human beings will sometimes get the better of mind and judgment, and she extended her hand to Captain Anglesey.

He raised it to his lips and reverently kissed the slender, ungloved fingers with his trembling lips, shaking like a man in delirium under the weight of this unexpected happiness.

It was the second time since his departure for India that his lips had touched Marigold's hand. We know what the first kiss cost him. For that brief and fleeting pleasure he had paid with the loss of his honour and twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour.

What would be the penalty of the second he did not dare to guess.

His appearance appealed forcibly to Marigold's sympathy.

His sedate and gloomy look, so different to that which his face used to wear in the happy days gone by when they were engaged to one another—his hair already tinged with gray—the eyes sunken, yet burning with a hidden fire—all reminded her of what he had endured for her sake.

"Oh, my dear Frank," burst from her with a moan. "How you must have suffered! How they have punished you!"

"I have forgotten it, Marie," he replied, using a fond abbreviation of her name which he used to apply to her in the happy days gone by. "I shall never think of it again, since I underwent the infliction for your sake, and since I see you once more."

"The recollection of your punishment," she said, "makes the thought of mine the more severe."

"Of yours!" he ejaculated, in surprise. "How is that? I did not know that you had been miserable."

"Ah you do not understand my husband," she an-

swered, with a sad smile, "nor did I until lately. But this I will tell you, we have the same executioner, whose thinly veiled brutality and indifference make themselves daily felt. As he is without pity for you so he is to me, and I assure you I cannot endure much more. No one but myself knows or ever can guess one half of what I have had to go through with that man; my life has been a slow, lingering torture."

It was difficult for Captain Anglesey to conceal his anger and agitation caused by this speech. It came upon him like a revelation. He had submitted to his cruel fate to save Marigold, but when he found that his sacrifice had been useless he lost the comfort which had hitherto consoled and supported him.

"Has Lord Kimbolton dared to denounce you?" he asked, his white lips quivering.

"Oh, no. He is far too clever for that. He knows that he could not even obtain a judicial separation from me, but he does worse, far worse than openly despise me. He treats me with hourly ignominy, and is evidently trying to kill me, though before strangers he assumes a hypocritical mask which is infinitely disgusting. He pretends to be kind and loving, expresses a tender solicitude for my health, and smiles, while he bends upon me the eye of the basilisk."

"Do you want to drive me mad, Marigold," cried Anglesey, "that you tell me this story of your wrongs? Can you forget what we once were to each other? and do you not know that this recital drives me to frenzy? Shall I avenge you?"

"No, but I ask you to save me."

"What can I do? There is no safety but in flight. If you will give up all and fly with me, we may yet find peace and happiness."

"Oh, if I could only hide with you in some cave in the mountain, where the foot of man never penetrates and with no human eye to watch us, I could die contented," she replied.

"Die, Marie! You wring my heart now as much as you inflamed my resentment a moment ago. Think of what is before us, my well beloved. We have the future. Forget the past. It is but a bad dream. The future, Marie—the future is ours. They cannot rob us of that."

She shook her head and sighed, while a hectic flush mantled her cheek, and that short cough—the forerunner of consumption—broke from her chest.

"My future will be short. I have the seeds of an insidious complaint planted in my breast, Frank. I shall not live long," she said, in a plaintive tone, "yet if I could die in your arms my soul would be at rest."

Tears flowed from Captain Anglesey's eyes; the pathos with which she spoke and the probability that what she said was true affected him deeply.

"Fly with me to-night—at once!" he exclaimed. "I will love you so, Marie, that you shall get well in spite of your forebodings. You must—you shall live for me and for your own sake. Leave this monster who calls himself your husband; no law would recognize a union perpetuated under such circumstances. It is a sin to compel a lady to live with a husband who treats her with the studied cruelty of Lord Kimbolton. The law grants a separation on the ground of cruelty. Very well, I have heard your case; I am the judge, I am the law, and I break the chains with which this man has bound you. I liberate you, Marie, you are free."

As he said this the light of enthusiasm kindled in his eye, and Marigold bent beneath his searching gaze, which seemed to have in it something allied to inspiration.

He had raised his voice so high while speaking that Wilfred Marshall, who stood near, could not help hearing what he said.

The proposal made to Lady Kimbolton alarmed him, for her own and his friend's sake. Such a step as he urged was fraught with peril to both of them, and it was clearly his duty to prevent them committing any rash action if he had the power to do so, which he rather doubted.

Advancing a few steps, he said:

"My dear Anglesey, I have overheard your proposition without intending to do so, and I beg you to hesitate before you take an irrevocable step."

"Am I not justified in asking Marie to break her chains?" replied Captain Anglesey.

"I answer unhesitatingly in the negative. It is madness—if Lady Kimbolton consents she sacrifices her position in society for ever."

"Her position," repeated Anglesey, scornfully, "what is it? Has she any enjoyment in life? Is she not hastening to the grave as quickly as the man she justly calls her executioner can send her? Do not talk to me of society and position."

"But consider—"

"I have considered," interrupted Anglesey, impatiently. "Marie was nine years before she saw Lord Kimbolton, whom she only married because she thought me dead, and was obliged to yield to the importunities of her ambitious aunt."

"Do not seek to dissuade us, Mr. Marshall," said Marigold; "for I feel that it is our fate to be united while I remain on earth. Soon all will be over."

"You must not yield to this infatuation," cried Marshall; "I will prevent it by some means. Kim-

bolton is in these rooms somewhere. I will seek him and inform him of your intention."

"Then never call yourself friend of mine again," replied Captain Anglesey.

Wilfred Marshall struck his forehead with his hand.

What could he do? He did not intend to betray his friend, he only threatened him in order that he might be alarmed.

"Well," he exclaimed, "if you will not listen to reason I shall not place any obstacle in your way, though you shall not accuse me in your calmer moments of being your accomplice."

"Go," replied Captain Anglesey; "tell Kimbolton that I have claimed my own. Say the culprit—or rather the victim—has obtained a reprieve on the scaffold—the condemned one is snatched from his grasp at the eleventh hour."

Wilfred Marshall hesitated.

"If you still call yourself my friend," continued the captain, "hasten to my house, bring with you a carriage and pair, and accompany us in our flight."

"Is your determination fixed?" said Wilfred.

"It is. Marie resigns herself to her first love. I must save her."

"In half an hour I will return. We have been together too long for me to desert you now," exclaimed Wilfred.

Anglesey extended his hand, which was grasped firmly, and the next moment the lovers were alone, for Marshall had gone on his errand, his head bent, and his mind filled with dismal forebodings.

Captain Anglesey rejoined Marigold.

"Half an hour to wait, dearest," he said, in a tender voice. "Then we shall have the world before us—liberty, happiness, love."

"Oh, Frank," replied her ladyship, "those words are so sweet that I could listen to them for ever. You raise me from the abyss of despair. Liberty for me is what freedom is to the slave; happiness for me is what the solitary felon in his prison cell has not dared to dream of; and love—oh, love is the dew of heaven which falls on the repentant sinner!"

"You must not mistrust the future, Marie, darling, my own sweet—sweetest pet," answered Frank Anglesey, in those impassioned tones which only the soul of one who loves madly can utter. "What care we for society—for anything? You are mine, and I am yours. There is an eternity of heavenly bliss in the bare thought. We must be brave and confident. Have you never seen the most lovely skies succeed the most awful tempests? All is peace and sunshine and calm where before were storm and blinding rain. It will be the same with us. We have been so miserable; we have submitted to all the agonies, all the tortures, all the griefs of this life—but Heaven is just. I dare to speak of Heaven in this connection. Your poor, bruised soul shall find that there is a balm in Gilead which is reserved for those who unjustly suffer. Wipe away your tears, for the days of weeping have passed, and now all shall be smiles and sunshine."

Marigold listened to him with a sort of dumb ecstasy.

Those musical words of love and hope touched the profoundest caverns of her innermost soul. Her eyes were half closed, and a divine smile sat upon her still lovely and unclosed lips.

"Don't you see, Marie, darling," continued the young man, "don't you see that we were created for one another, and that we ought to divide sorrows and joys between us? Go back with me for the last time over the past, which I have properly termed a bad dream. What do we see? The love which animated my being was kindled at the same instant in your soul. You vowed to be mine before I undertook that ill-fated voyage to India. I have little doubt now that Mrs. Henderson destroyed my letters to you, and invented the story of my death, so that you might make a more advantageous match in a worldly point of view."

"If I had only thought my aunt capable of such perfidy," sighed Marigold.

"It was through my fault that you were lost, but a fault which you know how to forgive, since it was love for you that dictated it. Imagine, Marie dear, my horror on returning to England to find you the wife of another! I looked upon him as a robber; he had stolen all that I prized on earth. Yet you were his, and I knew what a consoling world would say if we were found together. What did you do? Instead of abandoning me for my indiscretion, you did all you could to save me."

"It was fate, Frank," she said.

"You behaved like an honourable and virtuous woman, and I would have died sooner than the world should have been able to say a word against you. But all is altered now. I will struggle no longer against what you justly term fate. A year has passed since that dreadful meeting. I have worn the convict's dress, and eaten the convict's fare, while

I did the work that no labourer is ever called upon to perform. I thought it would have killed me at first."

"And I, Frank—I thought that you would never survive the hardships and the indignity."

"Had it not been for my love for you I must have sunk under it all," he replied. "But whenever the iron entered my soul most deeply I thought of you. 'It is for her sake,' I said, and I bore up. There is a sweetness after all in the bitter cup of suffering. The early Christians, under the sword of the persecutor, proudly offered their bodies for their faith; their cross was hard to bear, but they felt a pleasure in suffering, because through suffering they entered into their rest, and did the work they had set themselves; and I, Marie, feel a pride in having worn the yellow livery of the convict, because it was for you—it was the badge of my love."

"How he must love me!" murmured Lady Kimbolton. "How he must love me! It is worth while to have lived to be so loved."

Captain Anglesey caught the half-uttered words, and exclaimed:

"How I must love you! Oh, Marie, could you doubt it? Love for you is a creed with me; it is more than love—it is worship, adoration, idolatry!"

"Hush, Frank!" she said. "This is impious; you must not talk so. Heaven will be offended, and punish us again."

He was silent for a moment, and their hearts beat in unison.

"What do you fear?" he asked.

"My husband," she answered.

"He may threaten you, because the cruel hawk will prey upon the dove; but the greatest ruffian who ever beat his wife within an inch of her life starts back appalled when he sees the hooded snake in his path. He feels its slumbering venom."

"What would you say?" she asked, fearfully.

"Let Kimbolton beware. I am his snake, and it were best for him not to rouse me," answered Anglesey, with a threatening gesture.

CHAPTER XVI.

Lady T.: I scorn your imputations and your menaces. The narrowness of your heart is your monitor—the tears, my lord, you are wounded. You have less to complain of than many husbands of an equal rank to you.

The Provoked Husband.

"I WILL not waste words in assuring you of the depth of my passion, Marie," resumed Captain Anglesey, in a more gentle tone, as he saw that his violence alarmed and pained her. "Can the infinite be expressed in words? But you too love me with equal tenderness, therefore you are fully able to comprehend my feelings. Nothing can separate us. Torn from you, ruined, and thrown into a prison—I am again by a strange fatality side by side with you. Do not hesitate; we must make each other's Eden."

"I am yours, Frank. Why do you plead so earnestly?" she answered.

"I know it is not necessary, but it is so long since I had an opportunity of talking to you that I am afraid I may lose you. Your mind may change, or Kimbolton may intervene. I want to make sure of you, Marie, and I must pour out my soul to you or go mad," he replied.

"It is time that the bell of freedom sounded," she said, "for my strength would soon have failed me. There is a limit to human endurance, and mine is nearly reached."

"You have said 'Save me,' and I will do so, even at all hazards. After what I have gone through for you there is no risk too desperate to be encountered. Fortune is tired of persecuting us. I can already hear the tocsin of liberty. Come, Marie, rise—be brave; by this time Marshall will have returned; let us hasten to the carriage. I could wish to put words and oceans between us and your tormentor, my sweet one."

"Yes, let us make haste," said Marigold as she shivered with an undelined dread.

Lady Kimbolton rose and placed her hand upon Frank Anglesey's arm.

They hurried into the ball room, which was filled with people whirling in the maze of the giddy waltz; a mist seemed to swim before their eyes, they saw no one, but pushed their way through the crowd to the grand entrance, which it was necessary for them to gain ere they could descend the steps which would bring them to their carriage.

The vestibule was nearly gained. No one had spoken to—no one had stopped them. Everything so far was in their favour, when suddenly Lady Kimbolton uttered a stifled cry.

Captain Anglesey felt a tremor run through all his veins, and an icy chill penetrated to the marrow of his bones.

A hand fell upon the shoulder of her ladyship, and the touch seemed to scorch her glistening, lily-white skin and shrivel it up as if it had been a hand of fire.

Then a voice addressed her in accents of polite

"I believe your ladyship has mistaken your escort. If it is your wish to leave the ball I shall have the greatest pleasure in conducting you to your carriage."

Captain Anglesey turned, bristling with anger, and found himself facing Lord Kimbolton, who, however, did not deign to bestow so much as a glance upon him.

"Come, madam, your arm," he repeated.

A short instant of terrible silence followed these words.

Her ladyship's limbs seemed sinking under her. She could have fallen on her knees, but as if thinking of this Kimbolton seized her by the wrist in a grasp of iron and held her in such a crushing grip that he forced a cry from her, wrung unwillingly by sheer pain.

This cry, this groan—call it what you will—which came thrillingly from the white lips of the unhappy woman, smote Frank's heart as if a sword had been thrust through it.

"My lord," he exclaimed, in a hollow voice, his teeth set, his eyes sparkling, "this is an outrage. The man who knowingly hurts a woman is a coward. If you do not retract this I must teach you."

Lord Kimbolton looked at Captain Anglesey from head to foot as if he had never seen him before, and regarded him with a fixed and insolent stare of sovereign contempt.

"I fancy, sir, you speak to me," he remarked. "What did you say? I had the misfortune not to hear you."

"I told you that you were a coward, and I repeat it."

For a second time Lord Kimbolton favoured him with a look of contempt, and his only reply, in a tone such as he would use in addressing one immeasurably his inferior, was:

"You are in my way. Make room."

Instead of retiring, Captain Anglesey took two steps forward, and, folding his arms across his breast with an air of determination, replied:

"The time has arrived for you and I to settle a long-standing account."

"Get out of my way, sir; I do not know you," said his lordship, who with difficulty managed to sustain the shrinking woman on his arm.

"Take care, my lord," said Anglesey, whose anger increased momentarily, while the other preserved his composure.

"Take care of yourself, my good fellow, and let me pass. I have asked you twice. This insolence is too much."

"My lord," continued Anglesey, "I can forgive you all that you made me undergo, because it was in a great measure my own fault and my own doing; but I can never pardon you the suffering you have caused this angel, and I will exact a terrible revenge from you."

A sinister smile stole over Lord Kimbolton's countenance.

In a bitterly sarcastic tone he replied:

"You forget, sir, that this angel is my wife!"

"I deny it," answered Captain Anglesey. "You have broken the ties that existed between you; they have been snapped by your brutal behaviour. She casts off her allegiance and I proclaim her freedom. She is your wife no longer."

"For your advantage, perhaps," said Lord Kimbolton, with a sneer.

"If she is tired of your part of executioner can you wonder at it?"

"Who can prevent me from acting as I please?" asked his lordship.

"I!" replied the captain.

"In what way, pray? I have yet to learn how you can interfere with my movements."

"By killing you as one gentleman kills another, though it is an excess of courtesy to apply the term to you," replied Anglesey.

"And how is that, may I ask?"

"By fighting a duel. It is permissible out here. Duels are every day affairs. I will meet you and trust to the justice of my cause to run you through the body."

Lord Kimbolton did not allow himself to be in the least ruffled.

He laughed in a hard, cruel manner, and replied:

"A duel, and with you! Surely you forget who you are and whom you are talking to. A duel! My good man, a gentleman of honour and position does not fight with a convicted thief."

Hitherto the conversation had been carried on in a low voice, and the attention of the dancers and those who were promenading the ball-room was not arrested; but now Kimbolton spoke loudly and accented every word he uttered with an insulting emphasis which could not be mistaken. It was meant to wound—to insult—and every word went home. Each cruel thrust was felt by him for whom it was intended.

Captain Anglesey gave utterance to a roar of fury,

and, forgetful of the presence of a lady and the scene in which he was, raised his hand as if he would strike his lordship, but the latter seized his partially uplifted arm and forced it down, then, twisting it round with a force almost herculean—which his slender form concealed—exclaimed, in a voice of thunder:

"Quit this room! I order you!"

By this time the disturbance was so marked that the dancing was interrupted.

The orchestra stopped playing, and a rumour ran through the room that a quarrel had taken place between an English lord and the well-known and wealthy Mr. Coningsby.

All eyes were turned upon them. A slight crowd, which increased in numbers every minute, surrounded them, and people even got on chairs and benches the better to see what was going on.

"What is the matter?" asked a dozen voices at once.

"Gentlemen," replied Lord Kimbolton, "what has passed is unworthy of your attention. I am merely dismissing an impostor who should never have been allowed to enter into your company. My name is Kimbolton, and I am a peer of England; therefore I do not think you will require any corroboration of my statement."

He pointed to Captain Anglesey as he spoke, who stood before him, breathing heavily.

A murmur of astonishment and of indignation ran through the circle which surrounded them.

One spectator, who seemed to echo the general sentiment of the assembly, said:

"Mr. Coningsby an impostor and unworthy of our society! It must be a mistake, my lord."

"I never make a mistake," continued Lord Kimbolton; "and I know very well what I am talking about. You are the dupes of this fellow, who calls himself Mr. Coningsby and is in reality Captain Anglesey, late of the East India Company's service. This man I tell you is an impostor. This man has recently been discharged from prison. This man is a convict!"

The effect of this communication was immense upon the fashionable crowd. Yet many seemed incredulous. Mr. Coningsby had for so long a time been the popular idol that it was difficult to displace him at a blow.

"You, sir," continued Lord Kimbolton, addressing the person who had before spoken, "appear to take some interest in the discharged prisoner. Read that report of his case in the *Times*, which I happen to have in my pocket. You will see that he was condemned about two years ago to twelve months' imprisonment with hard labour for a robbery with violence from the house of Lord Kimbolton. As I was the prosecutor I ought to be well informed as to the facts."

The gentleman glanced hastily at the paper, then handed it back, saying:

"The evidence seems conclusive, my lord."

All fell away from Anglesey as if he was stricken with the plague or that dreadfully infectious leprosy which was so much dreaded in Eastern lands.

The circle grew large, and although the ladies were inclined to pity Frank the men evinced no sign of being merciful to him.

Certain of triumph Kimbolton continued:

"If you want any farther proof, gentlemen, of the truth of what I say you have only to look at the man. He cannot answer me. Guilt is unmistakably written upon his hang-dog countenance." Then he added, addressing Anglesey: "Begone, I say, a second time. I have unmasked, and I drive you from the society of respectable people."

Overwhelmed, crushed, thunder-stricken, Captain Anglesey almost lost his senses. Words rose to the tip of his tongue, but he could not utter them. The exposure was complete. The floor seemed to recede from his feet. The walls, the ceiling, the spectators all rolled before him in an indistinguishable mass. A vertigo took possession of him; a vast clamour arose on all sides and deafened him.

He pressed his hands to his forehead to still the throbbing of his brain, which seemed like a loom agitated by a huge shuttle in motion. He would have uttered wild, half-savage cries like those of a wild beast, but they died away in his throat with a hoarse rattle.

Then he thought it was night, and a black cloud enveloped him. He saw nothing more, he heard nothing farther; he fell from his high estate like a proud tree stricken by the axe, and, tumbling heavily forward in the midst of the wondering crowd, he became insensible.

Drawing his wife away, Lord Kimbolton exclaimed:

"Now, my dear, let us walk about."

"Oh, you will kill me!" murmured Marigold, who had been a horror-stricken spectator of this dreadful scene.

"I am perfectly aware of it," he answered. "The

end is sure, though the process takes time; and may seem slow."

He dragged the trembling lady away from the spot, while the servants carried the inanimate body of Captain Anglesey into the garden; that he might have the benefit of the fresh air.

Then the orchestra began to play again, and the dancers resumed their places, talking about what had happened, and enjoying the new scandal, which had arrived to enliven the monotony of their existence.

CHAPTER XVII.

The bridegroom may forget the bride

That wedded wife was made yestreen;

The monarch may forget the crown

That on his head an hour has been;

The mother may forget the child

That smiles so sweetly on her knee,

But I'll remember thee, Gleucainr,

And a' that thou hast done for me. Burns.

This husband and wife had not gone far before they met Mrs. Henderson and Doctor Dawson, who were promenading together.

They looked anxious and excited. It was evident that some intimation of what had happened had reached them.

"Oh, I am so glad we have met you," exclaimed Mrs. Henderson; "the people are talking about the dreadful scene that has happened, and they mention your name, Kimbolton, and that of the unfortunate Captain Anglesey, who, it appears, has been a great man here."

"He will not be a great man any longer, for I have exposed him. His reign is over here," replied Kimbolton.

"How pale your ladyship looks," observed the doctor.

"It is the heat," said Kimbolton, replying for his wife; "is it not, darling? Tell Doctor Dawson that you feel the heat, my dear."

"I—I am not well. It is the heat," answered her ladyship, who dared not disobey her husband.

"Ah," said the doctor. "You must not over fatigue yourself, my dear madam. Absolute rest was prescribed to Queen Elizabeth when she had the tooth-ache, and the physicians of those days—"

Mrs. Henderson cut short the worthy doctor's favourite theme, saying:

"Walk with me, Marie dear, to the refreshment room. An ice is so cool. You must have an ice."

"I will leave Lady Kimbolton in your charge while I take a turn with Doctor Dawson. Shall I find you in the refreshment room?" asked his lordship.

"Yes, we will wait there for you."

"We must make haste back to our hotel," continued Kimbolton.

"Oh, you will not leave this lovely scene so early," answered Mrs. Henderson; "yet if dear Marigold's health requires it—"

"I am always mindful of that, though it has not entered into my consideration in determining to return early. It is necessary that we should do so because we start by the first train to-morrow morning for Venice."

"For Venice? Leave Spa at a moment's notice, when all we see is so charming, and there are so many old friends here? Why, we have not been here more than a day yet," said Mrs. Henderson, in a tone of remonstrance.

"It is my wish—nay, more than that—my will, Mrs. Henderson," answered his lordship. "My dear Marigold is not so well here. The place does not agree with her, and she must have an immediate change."

"Indeed, you are mistaken," said Marigold, who did not wish to quit the place where Captain Anglesey was.

"My dear," replied Kimbolton, "allow me and Doctor Dawson to be the best judges. I appeal to you, doctor—does Spa agree with her ladyship?"

The doctor, who never contradicted his lordship, answered:

"Certainly not. In my opinion the air is too enervating. It will not do to remain here. I see a change for the worse already."

"Precisely so; therefore we start to-morrow morning. It will inconvenience me greatly, but what sacrifice is there I would not gladly make for my dear wife? Come, doctor, let us go to the tables for half an hour. I have a few sovereigns in my pocket which I do not mind losing."

Lord Kimbolton and the doctor walked away arm in arm, while Mrs. Henderson and Marigold sought the refreshment room.

Her ladyship passively allowed herself to be led thither in her usual childish manner. All the fire and determination which had been aroused in her by her meeting with Captain Anglesey had vanished with the crowning catastrophe of their interview.

When they were seated Mrs. Henderson said:

"I thought you would like to be alone with me,

dear child, if only to unburden your heart. You have seen him."

"Alas, yes. Would that I had not. It seems fated that I should always drag him down. He is now dismissed from the society of Spa, an exposed and disgraced man," replied Marigold. "I am the most unlucky woman that ever lived—unlucky to all I meet with. The sooner it is over the better. I know this cough is killing me; that is all the comfort I have."

As she spoke she removed the handkerchief from her lips, and Mrs. Henderson remarked that it was slightly stained with blood.

"You must not despond, dear," she said. "I know Kimbolton is harsh, but can you wonder at it? When I heard there was a disturbance going on I sent Dawson to find out what it was. He was in the midst of his intolerable story about Queen Elizabeth and her tooth-ache, which I have never heard in its entirety, and hope devoutly I never shall. Well, he returned saying that Kimbolton stopped you and Captain Anglesey just as you were going to elope, then he denounced the captain, and called him dreadful names—thief, convict and all the rest of it. Is that correct?"

"Quite. I will hide nothing from you," replied Marigold. "Why should I? What does it matter? what does anything matter now?"

"No wonder Anglesey was expelled, and it is really too bad of him to intrude himself upon respectable people after what has happened."

"Do you also side against him, aunt—you who are most to blame for his misery and my own?"

"How, child?" asked Mrs. Henderson, elevating her eyebrows.

"Can you ask?" replied Marigold, reproachfully.

"I am really very much in the dark, and shall take it as a great favour if you will enlighten me."

"Did you not invent the story of his death and keep back his letters from me? Had you not done so, and thus deceived me, I should never have married Lord Kimbolton. Never, never."

"My dear, you take an erroneous view of the case," replied Mrs. Henderson. "As your guardian and nearest living relative, I was obliged to look after your interests and prevent you making a foolish match if I could. How much better are you off now in a worldly point of view to what you would have been had you married a poor officer in the company's service? A man in the Guards or a cavalry regiment would not have been so bad, but the company's service! It was too dreadful to think of."

Marigold was in no frame of mind to be tortured with set speeches and stereotyped phrases.

"Do not talk to me like that now, aunt," she said. "I cannot bear it. The mischief is done and cannot be undone. I forgive you."

"And I think in my turn that you have nothing to pardon. I did my duty, and you should thank me."

"Have I ever proved ungrateful?"

"No. I will not say that, you have always been good and obedient, but the events of this evening have fairly startled me. I confess that. Fancy your planning an elopement. I can scarcely believe it."

"I was wrong, though before you condemn me you must consider the temptation of the moment."

"Making all the allowances for you I can, I am unable to exonerate you from blame, my dear," answered Mrs. Henderson.

"Oh I wish Kimbolton would come to take me home. I long to be at rest. In the solitude of my own chamber I can think and compose my mind."

"Here he is, dear," replied Mrs. Henderson.

At the same moment Lord Kimbolton entered the room and offered his arm to his wife with his usual politeness.

They went to the carriage, which conducted them to their hotel, and Flora, who was still in her ladyship's service, came upstairs to make her mistress's *toilette de nuit*.

Marigold sat in a listless way before the glass while her maid removed her chignon and brushed out her hair.

"Have you enjoyed yourself at the ball, my lady?" asked Flora.

"Oh, no," replied Marigold, adding: "Flora, can I trust you? will you do me a service? I know you are a spy upon my actions, and are supposed to report everything to his lordship, but surely one woman can feel for another."

"I am sure you judge me harshly, my lady," answered Flora. "I have my feelings, and I shall be happy to do anything for you."

"Then I will trust you. It matters little if my confidence is misplaced. Will you find out for me where Captain Anglesey is staying?"

"Captain Anglesey, my lady? Is he here? I thought he was in prison."

"He is released, and has been staying here for some time under the name of Coningsby. We have met, and my husband recognized him. He cruelly and shamefully denounced him."

"Well, my lady," replied Flora, "you can scarcely wonder at it. If a husband sees a lover with his wife it generally makes him wild, and I cannot blame my lord."

"What does your opinion matter? I did not ask you for that," replied Marigold, impatiently. "I want you to find out Mr. Couingsby, that is Captain Anglesey you know, and tell him we leave this place to-morrow morning early for Venice."

"Leave Spa, my lady?"

"Yes. Have you not heard?—I suppose you will have your instructions soon. We go away as soon as possible to-morrow morning. Let Frank—I mean Captain Anglesey—know where we are going. Tell him I hold him in my soul, and that he must see me again. Tell him to bear up bravely."

"There is my lord's valet, Mr. Rouse," said Flora, reflectively. "He is what they call spongy on me, my lady, and will do anything for me. If I give him the commission he will execute it."

"Do so then by all means and lose no time. I will go to bed by myself. Do this for me, Flora, and while I live you shall never want a friend," replied Marigold.

Flora was touched by her mistress's evident distress.

"I am very sorry for what has happened, and will really do all I can for you, my lady," she said. "Though I can feel for my lord too. If I was to catch Teddy with any other woman I'd give him a piece of my mind, and I don't know that I should not tear the hussy's cap off. However, Teddy shall start at once, and if you are not asleep—"

"Oh, no. I shall not sleep for hours. Come to me, Flora, and tell me what he says. If he can only bring me a line or a message from Frank I shall be eternally grateful to you. But at all events Captain Anglesey must know where we are going to."

Flora went away at once and found Teddy Rouse in the kitchen trying to speak French to the servants of the hotel and failing so dismally at each attempt that they all laughed at him.

"Teddy, come here," exclaimed Flora.

"I'm parley-vouing," he replied.

"Never mind. I want you."

"Bon soir," exclaimed Teddy. "Here's my what do you call it, my share ammy—that's my gal, you know."

The French and German servants laughed again, and Teddy rejoined his sweetheart.

"How on earth you can make such a ridiculous exhibition of yourself I don't know," she exclaimed. "I think you're going silly, Teddy."

"Well, that's a nice way to talk to a young gentleman," answered Teddy. "What's in the wind now?"

"I want you to do something for me."

"I thought so. What is it, my darling? You've only to name it and Teddy Rouse is off like a shot."

"I knew you'd do anything for me, Teddy dear," continued Flora. "Have you heard of a Mr. Couingsby since you've been here?"

"Have I?—haven't I? A Mr. Captain Anglesey, you mean. Wasn't I in the vestibule at the ball? and didn't I see the shire?"

"I have heard about it."

"All the gentlemen's gentlemen was talking about the affair, and some blamed my lord and others said it served the captain right. They do say that my lady was going to make a bolt of it, and that's why we're going to move on to Venice to-morrow morning. You've heard that, I suppose?"

"Of course I have," replied Flora.

"And what is it I'm to do? Make haste, my dear, for I'm dead beat and want to go to my bed."

"That you won't do just yet. You must go out and find Captain Anglesey, see how he is, and tell him that my lady is going to Venice. Give him her love and say she must see him again."

"That's a pretty thing to do. If my lord found me out it would be 'Go about your business, sir, and take a month's wages instead of notice,'" replied Teddy.

"You must risk that."

"I thought you did not care about my lady, and would rather serve master."

"Not in this case, Teddy. My lady is in love, and you know what that is, eh? So you've got some sympathy for her."

"Well," exclaimed Teddy, "it's not for me to find fault with you for that, Flo. Give me a kiss, my dear, and I'm off."

"I shan't," she replied.

"Then give me one when I come back."

"You shall have two, Teddy—two good, nice kisses if you go and do what I have told you," replied Flora. "And I'll wait up for you in my room till you come back. Ring the back-stairs call-bell twice and I'll come down."

"All right. I'm off. I'd go to the end of the world for you, Flo, and you know it, you little puss," said Teddy.

Flora smiled, and Teddy, putting on his hat, and taking up a walking-stick belonging to his master, sallied forth into the night on his errand.

(To be continued.)

DR. LIVINGSTONE'S ADVENTURES.

THE Times has been favoured with a summary of the despatches of Mr. Stanley to the *New York Herald*, who, it will be remembered, was commissioned to search for Dr. Livingstone. These despatches were forwarded by Mr. Stanley from Kwetara, Unyanyembe, by trusty and swift Arab couriers.

After passing through various dangers and difficulties from his leaving Zanzibar on the 23rd of January, 1871, Mr. Stanley on the 3rd of November, 1871, came in sight of the outlying houses of Ujiji, and, anxious to enter the African town with as much éclat as possible, he disposed his little band in such a manner as to form a somewhat imposing procession. As the procession entered the town Mr. Stanley saw a group of Arabs on the right, in the centre of whom was a pale-looking, gray-bearded white man, whose fair skin contrasted with the sunburnt visages of those by whom he was surrounded. Passing from the rear of the procession to the front, the American traveller noticed the white man was clad in a red woollen jacket, and wore upon his head a naval cap with a faded gilt band round it. In an instant he recognized the European as none other than Dr. Livingstone himself; and he was about to rush forward and embrace him when the thought occurred that he was in the presence of Arabs, who, being accustomed to conceal their feelings, were very likely to found their estimate of a man upon the manner in which he conceals his own.

A dignified Arab chieftain, moreover, stood by, and this confirmed Mr. Stanley in his resolution to show no symptom of rejoicing or excitement. Slowly advancing towards the great traveller, he bowed and said "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" to which address the latter, who was fully equal to the occasion, simply smiled and replied "Yes." It was not till some hours afterwards, when alone together, seated on a goat skin, that the two white men exchanged those congratulations which both were eager to express, and recounted their respective difficulties and adventures.

Mr. Stanley's statement is that Dr. Livingstone appeared to be in remarkably good health, stout, and strong, quite undiminished by all that he had gone through, and eager only to finish the task he had imposed upon himself.

Dr. Livingstone's story of his adventures was to the following effect. In March, 1866, he started from Zanzibar. The expedition which he led consisted of twelve sepoys, nine Johanna men, seven liberated slaves, and two Zambesi men—in all thirty persons. At first Dr. Livingstone travelled along the left bank of the Rovuma River; but, as he pursued his way, his men began to grow disaffected and frightened; and, in spite of all his efforts to manage and keep them together, most of them left him and returned to their homes, spreading everywhere the report of his death as a reason for their reappearance there. The sepoys, although they did not desert him, exhibited shortly afterwards a mutinous spirit, and the explorer was obliged to discharge them, also. In August, 1866, he arrived in the territory of Mpondo, a chief who rules over a tribe living near the N'yassa Lake; and here Wikoteni, a protégé of the doctor's, insisted upon being absolved from going any farther. After resting for a short time in Mpondo's ground Dr. Livingstone proceeded to inspect the "heel" of the N'yassa Lake; and it was while carrying out this enterprise that the Johanna men, who had till now remained faithful, deserted him, alleging, as their excuse, that a chief named Mazitu had suddenly taken to plundering, and was ill-using travellers who ventured into his neighbourhood. To account for their conduct they also invented a story of Dr. Livingstone's death, and their mendacious tales were the foundation of the reports which have circulated more or less ever since.

In December, 1866, having previously collected a number of natives, Dr. Livingstone decided upon advancing in a northerly direction; and, in pursuance of this determination, he traversed the countries of Babisa, Bobembena, and Borunga, as well as the region of Lunda. "Approaching King Cazembe's territory, he crossed a thin stream called the Chambezi, and here he found himself in great difficulty, being for a long while unable to discover to what the river belonged. The confusion which he experienced was greatly increased by the fact that Portuguese travellers had previously reported the existence of such a stream, and had asserted that it was a tributary of the great Zambesi River, having no connection whatever with the Nile. These statements Dr. Liv-

ingstone was disinclined to believe, and, determined to satisfy himself as to the rise and fall of the Chambezi, he made up his mind to devote himself to the task at once.

From the beginning of 1867 to the middle of March, 1869, he traversed the banks of the mysterious stream, tracing it where it ran, correcting the errors of the Portuguese travellers, and proving conclusively that the Chambezi was not the head of the Zambesi River as had been hitherto supposed. So constantly did he remain at this work, and so frequent were the inquiries which he made in every direction, that the natives, in astonishment at his persistence, supposed him to be insane; and their frequent remark was, 'The man is mad, he must have water on the brain.' Their ridicule had, however, no effect upon him, for he continued his work in spite of every opposition, and, as the result of his labours in this region, coupled with his farther researches, he has established conclusively (1st) that the Portuguese Zambesi and the Chambezi are totally distinct streams; and (2nd) that the Chambezi is the head waters of the Nile. He found that, starting from 11 deg. south, the River Nile rolled on until it attained the extraordinary length of 2,600 miles.

In the midst of his wanderings Livingstone came upon Lake Llenba, which he discovered to be fed by Lake Tanganyika. His map of the last-mentioned lake shows that the southern portion of it resembles in shape the lower part of the kingdom of Italy. He found that it rises in 8 deg. 42 sec. south, is 325 miles in length, being thus 73 miles longer than was supposed by Captain Burton and Captain Speke.

Leaving Tanganyika, the doctor crossed Marungu, and came in sight of a small lake called Lake Muero, which he found to be six miles in length and to be fed by the Chambezi. In his way he traced the Chambezi running through three degrees of latitude, and, having thus satisfied himself of the total independence of the Zambesi, he returned to King Cazembe's country and then made his way to Ujiji, where, early in 1869, he wrote letters and despatched them by messengers. A short rest was made at Ujiji, and, having explored the head of the Tanganyika Lake, and thus finding out that the River Rusizi flowed into the lake, and not out of it, as had been supposed, he made preparations for another and as he then hoped a final journey of exploration.

Leaving Ujiji in June, 1869, he pushed through the Ugubba country, and after 15 days' march he came to Mangema, which he found to be a virgin country, the interior of which seemed utterly unknown to anybody. As he was about to proceed, however, he was seized with an illness which at one time almost threatened to put an end to his explorations. Ulcers formed in his feet, and for six weary months he was obliged to rest and wait. As soon as he had recovered he started off in a northerly direction, and came shortly afterwards to a broad river called Luabala, which flowed in a northerly, westerly, and southerly direction. Strongly suspecting that this river was but a continuation of the Chambezi, which enters the Bangweulu, Luapula, and Muero lakes, he retraced his steps to Lake Kamolondo, and then working his way to lat. 4 deg. south, and after a long and difficult journey, he found the point where the Luabala and Chambezi joined, and proved them to be both one and the same river. He followed the course of the latter river for several hundred miles, and had come within 180 miles of that part of the Nile which has already been traced, when the men he had with him mutinied and deserted him.

Having now neither stores nor followers, he was obliged to retire to Ujiji, weary and destitute. It was soon after this that Mr. Stanley found him. In fact, the English explorer arrived at Ujiji on the 16th of October, 1871, and it was, as already stated, no later than the 3rd of November when the American searcher made his entry into Ujiji. On the 25th of November Dr. Livingstone and Mr. Stanley left Ujiji in company, and explored the northern end of Lake Tanganyika, confirming by a second inspection the observations which Dr. Livingstone had previously made; and after 28 days thus pleasantly spent they returned to Ujiji, and there passed Christmas Day together. On the 26th of December they left for Unyanyembe, and, arriving there, stayed together till March 14, when Mr. Stanley, entrusted with letters from Dr. Livingstone, started for the coast, leaving the explorer to continue his searches for some time longer.

Dr. Livingstone states that he considers he has yet two problems to solve in connection with the Nile. The first the complete exploration of the remaining 180 miles which lie between the spot where he was compelled to turn back and the part already traced; and he should investigate the truth of a report which has several times reached him respecting four fountains, which, he has been told, supply a large volume of water to the Luabala. To complete this task Liv-

ingstones estimates that he will require 16 or 18 months. Mr. Stanley, however, is of opinion that it will occupy a longer period.

PORTRAIT OF MRS. SHERIDAN.—Baron Rothschild has purchased, for a very large sum (8,000 guineas), the whole-length portrait of Mrs. Sheridan, by Gainsborough, exhibited in the Academy in 1783, and which was for a long time at Dalapre Abbey, where Sheridan was a frequent visitor.

The Prince of Wales will, it is expected, lay the first stone of the Norfolk County School buildings in the course of the autumn. The cost of the buildings is estimated at 8,000*l.*, and the school is expected to be brought into operation by Midsummer, 1873, or thereabouts.

MR. HERBERT'S PICTURE.—The public has been reminded by a recent conversation in the House of Commons of Mr. Herbert's long-deferred picture for the peers' robing-room at Westminster. It is surely desirable that we should learn when it is expected that the painting will be finished. Mr. Herbert has enjoyed a great advantage which was denied to the other artists employed at Westminster, in being permitted to adopt oil-painting instead of fresco or stencils, yet his work has been in hand during more years than we like to name.

WATER OF THE DEEP SEA.—An apparatus for obtaining water from the depths of the ocean has been invented in Germany. An open vessel of suitable form and size is lowered by means of a rope, and when the desired depth has been reached an electrical current is transmitted through a wire that accompanies the lowering rope, and this current, inducing activity in an electro-magnet attached to the apparatus, releases powerful springs, which act upon stop-cocks, thus enclosing the water at any degree of depth. Some useful experiments in the determination of the carbonic acid in sea-water have been made through the agency of this apparatus.

A REMARKABLE FLOWER.—A flower has been described by an eye-witness at Constantinople which is so great a rarity that one is apt to treat it as a fable, and wait for the confirmation of one's own eyesight. It belongs to the narcissus kind of bulb, and bears the botanical name of *ophrys mouche*. There were three naked flowers on the stalk hanging on one side; the underneath one was fading, while the two others were in all their beauty. They represented a perfect humming-bird. The breast of bright emerald green is a complete copy of this bird, and the throat, head, beak, and eyes are a most perfect imitation. The hinder part of the body and the two outstretched wings are bright rose colour, one might almost say flesh-coloured. On the abdomen rests the whole propagation apparatus, of a deep dark-brown tint, in the form of a two-winged gadfly.

THE COSTLINES OF LAW.—The Albert Arbitration, in which Lord Cairns has just issued his award, has brought to light some startling facts. It appears that, according to the estimate formed by the solicitor in charge of the Albert Bill, if the societies were wound up in Chancery, the proceedings would last seven years, and cost 210,000*l.* Lord Cairns has done the business in one year at a cost of 13,428*l.* This astounding difference is repeated in detail. One of the subsidiary societies was ordered to be wound up in Chancery, and the expenses came to 1,136*l.*, and substantially nothing was done. The expense of settling everything before Lord Cairns was 118*l.* Perhaps these figures may give us a lively sense of the value of the Geneva Conference, for if a lawsuit is costly a war is ruinous. But they suggest a wider question. Why should not the courts have power to send those complicated cases before an arbiter? Another question is suggested. Cannot our courts do something to emulate the cheapness and speed of arbitration? Dignity and formality may be bought too dear. Our procedure is too cumbersome and costly.

LONDON "MILK."—A report was made to the Poor Law Board last year by Mr. F. W. Rowsell, Superintendent of Admiralty Contracts, on the supply of provisions for the workhouses of the metropolis. Fifty-seven samples of milk so supplied were examined by Mr. Alfred Wanklyn by the most trustworthy processes, and showed the following results:—Only two samples came under the designation "best unskimmed milk;" eight were possibly neither skimmed nor watered, but simply rather poor by nature—that is to say, poor as yielded by the cow; the remainder were either skimmed or watered, or both. Ten were found to be totally skimmed and very largely watered, and no less than seven samples consisted of milk 50 per cent. water 50 per cent.—milk and water half-and-half. Mr. Rowsell observes that though no poisonous or deleterious matter was found in the samples collected dilution or adulteration with water is shown to such an extent as seriously to compromise the character of the milk and to make it utterly unreliable as food for infants or aged persons. The life

of an infant depends upon the quantum of nourishment in the milk given to it. A list of the prices paid for milk under workhouse contracts in force last year shows that the charges made differed greatly; the range was from 7*d.* to 1*s.* per imperial gallon. The list shows genuine milk supplied at 8*d.* or 9*d.*; and it shows 10*d.* charged for milk totally skimmed and very largely watered, and 1*s.* where the cream had been skimmed off and a little water added.

FIGHTING WITH FATE.

CHAPTER VII.

ON entering the Red House Honor Glint was not suffered to go immediately to her own room. The door of the drawing-room was ajar, and, as she paused in the hall to remove her hat and jacket, Mrs. Glint's voice, sharp and disagreeable, called to her. Honor obeyed the summons, and went into the drawing-room.

The lamps were lighted; the fire was burning brightly; and Mrs. Glint sat with her feet on the fender, her hands folded in her lap. She was no longer alone, her daughter, Miss Milner, having joined her. The latter was in the act of drawing the red silk curtains at the moment of Honor's entrance.

Miss Milner was a commonplace young woman, with a very ordinary face and figure, and a cloud of light curls which fell to her waist. She had, without grounds for it, an extraordinary amount of vanity, and was endowed with a jealous and envious disposition, indulgence of which gave a peevish and discontented expression to her countenance. Honor's beauty was an eyesore to her. Honor's brilliant wit and glowing fancies, contrasting painfully with her sluggish intellect, inspired her with a hatred of Captain Glint's adopted daughter.

Finally, the fact that Captain Glint nearly idolized Honor, and looked upon her as his heiress—a fact which Mrs. Glint had hastened to unfold to her daughter—filled her narrow soul with bitterness. Her envy and hatred of Honor, added to Mrs. Glint's ambition and greed, had brought about the state of affairs which had culminated in Honor's threatened dismissal from the house.

Mrs. Glint looked sharply at the young girl as she came into the room, and said, sternly:

"You are out late, Honor. My daughter does not indulge in tramps about this country at so late an hour of the day as this. What would Captain Glint say? What will the neighbours say?"

Honor sat down wearily and answered, calmly:

"I have been across the fields, madam. Mr. Moer came back with me as far as the paddock."

Mrs. Glint uplifted her hands in apparent horror.

"So you went out to meet him?" she exclaimed.

"I am really shocked, Honor. I can scarcely believe the evidence of my ears."

"I did not go out to meet Mr. Moer," said Honor, her colour rising. "Why should I make appointments to meet any one away from home when I can see them here? I went across the fields for a walk, and sat down upon a stile to rest and think. Mr. Moer saw me there and came to speak to me, and as I arose at once to return he came with me."

"You need not tax your imagination for excuses, Honor," said Mrs. Glint, coldly. "Your proceedings can be nothing to me. Whether you actually went out to meet Mr. Moer, or simply, as you say, to walk, does not concern me. I am not inclined to keep you here in helpless dependence upon my husband. I daresay he would support every beggar in the kingdom if he had only the means to do it. I cannot permit you longer to take advantage of his foolish and unthinking generosity. You are a pauper, and the sooner you realize the fact the better. It is my firm belief that you are the child of that Margaret Oropsey who pretended to be simply your nurse. You have been educated beyond your sphere as a lady, and now, if you have any sense of gratitude or decency, you will support yourself."

The pale young face of Honor Glint retained its calm sweetness, only the sadness in her eyes deepened.

"Is this all you have to say to me, madam?" the girl asked, half-haughtily.

"It is not, miss. I called you in to hear an extract from a letter which Clarette received to-day from an old school friend of hers who is now visiting down in Cornwall. Clarette read it to me during your absence. When I questioned you before you went out an hour or two ago concerning your matrimonial intentions I asked you if you aspired to marry Sir Hugh Tregaron, the rich Cornish baronet. Your manner was such that I might almost have been led to believe that you did indulge in some such dream. Clarette's friend writes to her that Sir Hugh Tregaron is engaged to be married to a very wealthy lady of rank, and that preparations are being made

for the nuptials upon a scale of almost unprecedented magnificence."

Honor did not speak, and her face was averted. It seemed as if she had no personal interest in the communication.

"Oh, mamma!" murmured Miss Milner, in an undertone. "You always exaggerate so. Caroline says that Sir Hugh Tregaron is making extensive improvements in his house and about his estate, and that people think he must be going to be married, but she does not say that he is even engaged."

Mrs. Glint commanded her daughter to be silent by an imperious wave of her hand.

Unmoved as she seemed at Mrs. Glint's communication, Honor had been for a brief period actually stunned by it. In the momentary blunting of her senses, when her eyes seemed suddenly blinded and a confused ringing obscured her hearing, Miss Milner's correction of Mrs. Glint's statement escaped her notice. But before Mrs. Glint could speak again Honor regained her self-command sufficiently to arise from her chair and to say, with a gentle, girlish dignity:

"I am glad to hear anything that is likely to add to the happiness of Sir Hugh Tregaron. He came home from Alexandria in the 'Argonaut' when I was upon my trip with papa, and not more than four months ago. I have not known him long, but he was very kind to me, and he is especially papa's friend. He has been here several times to see papa since he returned to England, and papa is very fond of him."

"And perhaps papa's pauper charge is also," sneered Mrs. Glint. "Sir Hugh has never been told your history, I am morally sure. He believes you to be Captain Glint's daughter by a former wife, and the captain would not allow me to tell him the truth. The captain said if Sir Hugh was only a friend to you the truth about you did not concern him; but if Sir Hugh wanted to marry you the captain would tell him your story at the proper time. So there is nothing, you see, to prevent his offering you his hand if he had liked you, unless his pride had intervened. Even considering you as Captain Glint's own daughter, Sir Hugh Tregaron's marriage with you would have been a perfect misalliance. But if it should have happened that Sir Hugh had accidentally discovered your true history he may consider, and very justly so, that Captain Glint is trying to foist you upon society and upon a husband under a false character. At any rate, whatever he thinks, he has shown pretty conclusively that he is not to be taken in by a nameless young woman."

Honor's pale face glowed with sudden scarlet.

"Had I deemed it necessary," she said, "I should certainly have told Sir Hugh Tregaron my story long ago. I had no idea of seeming other than I am. I have not made my history public because papa desired me not to do so. He said it was not necessary to take the world into our confidence, and so the fact that I am not Captain Glint's own daughter is known to very few. Sir Hugh is too noble to suspect me of attempting to foist myself upon him, or upon any one. He is my friend; he has never been more; and is as much my friend as ever. Is this all you have to say to me, madam? Then I beg leave to go to my own room. Good-evening."

With a stately little nod of the pale golden head Honor left the drawing-room without awaiting a reply, and went up to her own apartment.

Her rooms, comprising a sunny little sitting-room, an airy bed-chamber, and a bath-closet, were situated directly above the drawing-room and morning parlour.

These rooms did not possess the sumptuous character of the grand and lofty apartments into which the acknowledged heiress of Floyd Manor was being ushered at that very moment, but they were very cozy and pleasant.

The low walls were panelled in oak black as ebony with age, but this sombreness was relieved by a profusion of gilt-framed cabinet pictures, glowing bits of colour from the hands of artists of acknowledged genius.

The wide casement windows were draped with pale blue damask, which fell in heavy folds upon the floor. The carpet was new and bright, of a pale blue colour, and the furniture was upholstered in the same delicate tint. The low wide mantel-shelf was of exquisitely carved oak, and supported two large and antique vases, also of pale blue. Under the mantelpiece, in the wide, low grate, a fire was burning, and before the fender an easy-chair was drawn up in the most inviting manner.

Honor looked about for her little maid, but the girl was not there. Then she came forward to the fire shivering, and sat down upon the hearth-rug, and strove to think calmly upon her position, and to come to a decision in regard to Darrel Moer's proposal of marriage to her.

Ten o'clock found her still undecided.

Her little maid, an undersized, rosy-cheeked girl, a little younger than Honor, came up and undressed her as usual, and, noticing the unusual gravity of her young mistress, was very affectionate in her attentions.

This girl had been taken by Captain Glint from the Liverpool orphan asylum, and had been trained by the wife of one of the captain's officers as a lady's-maid.

On Honor's return from school the girl had been transferred to her and had become devotedly attached to her young lady. She rejoiced in the unusual but by no means unprecedented name of Lucky, and, having no surname of her own, she was known, when a surname was required, as Lucky Banner, the latter name having been assumed out of compliment to the benefactor of the asylum, Mr. Harmond Banner.

It was not one of the least of Honor's new anxieties that her expulsion from the Red House would throw her maid upon the world homeless and destitute as herself. She dismissed the girl as early as possible and went to bed, where she lay for hours meditating upon the sudden change in her lot, and endeavouring to come to some decision in regard to her future.

For the first time in her young life she experienced a terrible sense of desolation and friendlessness.

"Papa will be distressed by all this," she thought, turning restlessly upon her pillow. "His domestic peace depends upon my withdrawal from his guardianship. His wife is of course many times nearer to him than I am, and if he were to turn her from his house in his anger at her treatment of me scandal would make busy with his name, and perhaps also with mine. He has been the best of fathers to me and I need not be less than a daughter to him if I earn my own living. It is settled that I cannot go to an hotel and await his return, and allow him to find a new home for me or bring me back to the Red House. What, then, can I do?"

She lay silent for a little while, with her eyes fixed upon her window, through which the pale light faintly entered, and presently her thoughts again shaped themselves into words.

"Sir Hugh Tregaron is nothing to me. He never spoke a word of love to me. Why should Mrs. Glint speak so to me of him? Mr. Moor is certainly very noble. He seemed to think none the less of me because I am nameless and a child of charity. He loves me. He will give me the shelter of his honourable name; he will allow me to found schools for the poor, an hospital for old women, and an asylum for orphans. I like him; I respect him; I can easily grow to love him. If I marry him Lucky can remain with me always, or until she marries. As his wife my life can be one of loving charity and kindly deeds. Is it not my duty to marry him?"

Although she pondered the question for hours she would not decide her fate that night.

When morning came and Lucky had lighted her fire and she arose, she was pale and wearied, but still undecided. She dressed herself with her maid's assistance, and then, knowing that the girl must soon hear of her proposed departure from the Red House, she told her of it with a calmness that surprised herself.

"You do not know it, Lucky," she continued, "but I am not Captain Glint's own daughter, only a poor girl whom he adopted as his own, and loved and cherished and educated. I love him better than my life, but perhaps I ought not longer to be an expense to him. I can go out as governess, but papa would then find me and bring me back, and that would not be advisable. I had last evening a proposal of marriage, Lucky, from Mr. Moor, the handsome, Italian-looking gentleman who has been staying all the winter at Lyushire Place, and who has visited the Red House so frequently. Mr. Moor is rich, and heir to a title, and as his wife I can do a great deal of good. And so—and so, Lucky," added the young mistress, walking to the window and looking down into the paddock, "I—I have decided to marry Mr. Moor."

The little maid was amazed.

"Mr. Moor is a handsome gentleman, Miss Honor," she exclaimed, "but I fancied you would marry Sir Hugh Tregaron. Miss Clarete means to catch him, and now she'll surely make it out. When do you expect to be married, miss?"

"This morning, Lucky. Mr. Moor will obtain a special licence," said Honor, in a firmer tone, her mind being quite made up. "You will go with me to church and witness my marriage. You need never leave me unless you choose. I must go down to breakfast presently, and while I am gone I want you to get out my blue silk suit. I shall wear that to be married in."

"But, Miss Honor, a bride should wear white—" "I shall walk to church, Lucky. My marriage is not to be made public for a few weeks, as Mr. Moor

wishes to inform his uncle of it before it is announced to others. It will be a very quiet marriage, you see, Lucky, but I trust it will be a happy one."

The maid accepted the decision of her young mistress as final, and offered no dissuasion. Honor presently descended to the breakfast-room, where she was joined by Mrs. Glint and Miss Milner. After breakfast she returned to her rooms.

The March day was mild and the sun was shining palely. Honor arrayed herself in a blue silk walking-suit, the lower skirt having a flounce of blue velvet, and put on her dainty blue velvet jacket and hat. An ermine boa and muff gave effect to her costume.

Lucky donned her Sunday garments, and about a quarter before eleven o'clock the young mistress and her maid left the Red House and set out upon their walk to Ivy Lane, at the corner of which Honor had promised to meet her intending bridegroom.

Their departure from the house was not observed either by Mrs. Glint or Miss Milner, and therefore excited no comment. They walked on leisurely and in silence, Honor's mood controlling that of her attendant.

A half-mile of distance interposed between them and their destination. This was soon traversed, even at the rate at which they walked, and they turned into Ivy Lane just ten minutes after leaving the Red House.

Ivy Lane was a favourite resort for lovers of the humbler classes at a later hour of the day, and was simply a narrow carriage-way a quarter of a mile in length, connecting two principal streets. It was bordered on either side during its whole length by tall, stone garden walls, whose tops bristled with broken bottles laid in cement, and whose sides were draped with ivy which covered them as with a garment.

No house overlooked Ivy Lane, few carriages traversed it, and it was always in shadow save at mid-day.

A carriage however was now waiting within the lane. A coachman sat upon the box impatiently flicking his whip, and Mr. Darrel Moor was walking up and down in the shadow of the wall awaiting Honor with impatience.

As she turned into the lane he hurried towards her, all eagerness and anxiety. His dark, handsome face was glowing, his eyes full of questioning. Honor's maid fell back discreetly, and Mr. Moor seized Honor's hands in his, exclaiming:

"My darling, I have had a night of terrible suspense. What are you going to say to me? I have the licence in my pocket, the church is open, and my man is waiting in it to serve as our second witness. I see you have brought your maid. What is my fate to be, Honor darling? Am I to be the most blessed or the most miserable of men?"

Honor withdrew her hands from his, and uplifted to him a pale, heroic face and eyes like burning lamps.

She realized now as she had not done before the importance of the step she meditated, but she had no thought of turning back. On the contrary Moor's manner aroused within her a faint thrill of kindness toward him, which was the first kindling of affection.

She did not dread marriage with him. Suddenly this marriage seemed to her a refuge, a stronghold, and her heart grew lighter as she said, blushing, yet smiling faintly:

"I have come to go to church with you, Mr. Moor. I told you last night that I did not love you, but I will be a true and faithful wife to you, and I am sure—I feel already—" and she stammered—"that is, I believe I shall love you."

"I know you will," cried Darrel Moor, his dark face beaming. "You have made me very happy, Honor. You shall never repeat your faith in me. Come, my darling. Let me help you into the carriage."

He conducted her to the hired vehicle and assisted her into it, folding over her knees an embroidered lap robe.

He held open the door while Lucky climbed in and seated herself opposite her young mistress, and he then followed her, closing the door, and seating himself beside the maid.

Rapping upon the glass which intervened between him and the coachman, he gave the order:

"To the church. Be lively!"

The driver cracked his whip, the horses started, and the carriage rolled down the lane, proceeding swiftly toward the church.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN that part of the town of Bolton-Le-Moors where the streets are narrowest, the houses thickest and the population densest, stands a little old chapel, quaint, dingy, and weather-beaten. It is frequented for the most part by the factory people who live in the neighbourhood, but its stained-glass windows, its richly carved oak pulpit and chancel railing, its

ample pews, and marble tablets set into the walls and forming the flooring, bearing inscriptions to the memory of some knight or squire, some dame or lady, whose bodies have long since mouldered to dust in the vaults below—all these attest that, scores of years ago, this little old chapel was a fashionable place of worship.

It looks lonely and deserted even in the midst of the bustle and stir of its humble surroundings, and its dusky aisles are seldom swept by rustling silks in these latter days.

It was this gray old chapel which Darrel Moor had selected as the scene of his marriage to Honor Glint.

Its very quietness and seclusion had induced him to select it that morning when, after obtaining his licence, he passed it in his cab on his way towards Ivy Lane. He had ordered his man to alight and to summon the clergyman, and to have all in readiness for the expected marriage, and he was now on his way to this place with his intended bride.

Both Honor and Darrel Moor were silent during their drive together to the chapel. Now that she had made up her mind to marry her Italian-looking lover Honor was conscious of a shy sense of pride and satisfaction in him, and with the lot she had chosen.

Sir Hugh Tregaron had never spoken a word of love to her, and she had never dared to think of loving him, but Darrel Moor invited her affection by tender looks and protestations of love for her, and her desolate soul and her gratitude to him began to grow more tender, and to take on the semblance of affection.

As for Moor, his thoughts were in a chaos during the drive.

While Honor had held aloof from him, repelling him by her half-haughty coldness, he had been wild to possess her as his wife. Her beauty bewitched and allured him, as none other's had ever done, and he had even been ready to risk Lord Waldemar's displeasure, the wonder of his society friends, and to sink all his ambition to make a grand alliance, in order to make this young girl his wife.

But now the excitement of pursuit was over, now that she had consented to marry him, and they were actually on their way to be married, Darrel Moor's tickle heart failed him, and in his soul he called himself an idiot, and would at the last moment have withdrawn from his part of the contract, could he have done so decently.

"It's not that I don't love her," he thought. "I do. I fairly worship her, but I need not have been in such a haste about marrying her. She's only a penniless, nameless girl, and I'm heir to a title and to great estates, and I could marry almost whom I like. But it's too late to draw back. I can't jilt the girl at the very altar, and, after all, her beauty will draw people of rank about her, and is a sort of passport of nobility in itself. I thank Lord Waldemar will take to her and pet her, and make a sort of idol of her, and that will be pleasant for me, for the old fellow has rather been down upon me lately. He actually called me a selfish, mercenary rascal when I went up to town the other day to see him during his illness. Honor will help me to strengthen my position with him; and Heaven knows it needs strengthening. He's found out too many of my shortcomings lately. There is of course a great risk that Honor's doubtful descent will cause him to cast us both adrift, as he cast off Wallace and Janet. That reminds me that I have been a consummate idiot to think of marrying a girl of unknown and of course lowly and very possibly disgraceful parentage. By Jove! It seems as if I were just waking up. But how can I back out at this late moment?"

He glanced across at Honor, and met the full and steady gaze of her splendid eyes. Then, as the full glory of her loveliness appealed through his eyes to his soul, his infatuation for her was strengthened, and he was again conscious only of her beauty and his love for her.

As they drove up to the chapel at last Darrel Moor's valet, who was standing under the arch of the closed doorway, came down and opened the door, and the bridegroom alighted and assisted Honor also to alight.

The maid clambered out by herself. Darrel Moor ordered the cabman to go away to a neighbouring corner, in order that spectators might not be attracted into the church to witness the wedding. Then he hurried his party into the chapel, and his man closed the door after them.

There were present then in the church Darrel Moor and his man—a thin, sinister-faced, elderly fellow, who was already deep in his master's confidence—and Honor Glint and her maid Lucky, the gray-haired, superannuated clerk, and an old woman who was the pew-opener.

The clergyman who was to officiate upon the occasion came out of the vestry in his full canonicals, and bowed gravely to the bridal pair, sur-

veying them both with keen and comprehensive glances.

Darrel Moor led Honor towards the clergyman, who met them half-way, and Moor presented to him his marriage licence, which he carefully perused.

While he was thus engaged Honor looked at him closely. He was a young man, with a very high forehead, and scanty allowance of hair, and with a countenance in which could be traced nothing of weakness or passion. He had an austere expression, but his eyes had a saintly look in them, and, as Honor continued to regard him, he reminded her of pictures she had seen of holy martyrs who had died steadfast in the faith, and exulting even in the midst of physical anguish.

"This is all right," said the clergyman, when he had read the licence to the very signatures. "I will marry you at once. I am in some haste as I am expecting a double marriage party immediately, and they will probably be the last marriages at which I shall ever officiate in England," and he sighed.

"How is that, sir?" asked Darrel Moor.

"I leave to-morrow upon a mission to Africa, with a party of devoted clergymen sent out by our bishop to found churches among the heathen," replied the clergyman, cheerfully. "Be kind enough to take your places before the altar, and we will proceed with the ceremony."

The supernumerary clerk, who seemed quite deaf and dumb, yet placed the bridal pair in the proper place and attitude, and the marriage proceeded. The words were soon spoken that made Darrel Moor and Honor Glint one flesh—that wedded together two beings as unlike to each other as darkness and light, truth and treachery, vice and goodness.

This marriage, so horribly unfitting, was but the dawn of evil days to Honor Glint. It was the commencement of a tragic drama whose end none could foresee.

The ceremony ended, the pew-opener proceeded to open the chapel doors for the ingress of the expected bridal party, and the newly married pair, with their witnesses and the clergyman, went into the vestry to sign the marriage register.

This was soon done, and the register was locked up in the rickety old safe in which it was ordinarily kept. The clergyman wished all happiness to the blushing young bride; but in the midst of his congratulations to the newly wedded pair he was summoned into the chapel to marry the two happy couples who had arrived with their train of friends.

There was a fire in the vestry grate, and Honor stood before it, stretching out her hands to the blaze. A sudden chill had come upon her that was like the chill of death.

"Bing," said Darrel Moor, addressing his valet, "go out and find our cab and bring it to the door."

The valet departed leisurely. He was not wont to hurry himself at any time, presuming probably upon the fact that he was too well versed in his master's secrets to fear discharge.

He had scarcely vanished when the pew-opener appeared at the vestry-door, ushering into the presence of the newly wedded pair a young man of decidedly rakish aspect, with bold eyes, a swaggering manner—evidently a "fast" and dissolute young fellow.

This was Darrel Moor's intimate friend and host, the owner of Lyshill Place.

This young man approached Moor, even while his bold eyes fixed themselves admiringly upon Honor.

"I thought I should find you here, Moor," said the new comer. "I've been to several chapels already. I knew you would not be in one of the Dissenting churches. You ought to see my cab horse. He's but one remove from death; I've put him through so savagely. I see I'm here in time, though. You're waiting for the couples out there to be disposed of, I suppose. Glad on your account I got here before the marriage, you know. A couple of letters have come for you marked 'in haste,' and by Jove, you know, I thought I'd hunt you up and give them to you with my own hands. They are not mourning letters, but then it's quite possible Lord Waldemar is dying, though why they didn't telegraph—"

Darrel Moor started and turned white.

There was a small room adjoining the vestry, and used as a wardrobe study, or whatnot. It was lighted by a small window.

Moor drew his friend into this room, and held out his hand, saying, as he closed the door that led into the vestry:

"Give me the letters, Carrington."

His friend produced the letters and gave them to him.

They had been posted the previous night from the village nearest Floyd Manor, in Yorkshire, and were addressed in the handwriting of Lord Waldemar's business manager, Nelson Grimrod.

Moor recognized the handwriting immediately and tore open one of the letters in an uncontrollable agitation and excitement.

"It's from Grimrod!" he exclaimed, his voice penetrating distinctly to the vestry and to the ears of his young bride, who had seated herself before the fire. "I—I cannot see a line, Carrington. The old man must be dying. And if he is—No, he is not! Merciful Heaven, what does this mean?—I write by Lord Waldemar's command to inform you that the daughter of Wallace and Janet Floyd, both deceased, has arrived this evening at Floyd Manor, and has been acknowledged by his lordship as his grand-daughter and heiress, the future Baroness of Waldemar!" The furies! Wallace Floyd left a daughter! Wallace Floyd from his grave has reached out a hand to mock me and to rob me of all I coveted. I—I cannot believe it!"

He sank down in a chair ghastly and panting. Carrington looked over his shoulder.

"The letter is dated last night," he said. "It has come through promptly. So the girl arrived at Floyd Manor last night and slipped into your place while you were here making love to the little Glint. Lucky you're not married to her yet, though she's so deuced pretty I wouldn't have minded making her Mrs. Carrington at any minute if she'd only taken a liking to me. What will you do? Leave Miss Honor, of course, and post off into Yorkshire. When a man's bread and butter are threatened he must give love the go-by, you know."

Darrel Moor groaned aloud.

"It comes hard on you, and no wonder," said Carrington, sympathetically. "But you haven't read your other letter. Perhaps that contains something to soften the blow."

Darrel Moor tore open the second letter in a sort of desperation, and read its contents eagerly.

This letter had been written also by Lord Waldemar's business manager, and was a confidential one.

It had been written after Grimrod's return from the manor to his own house, had been posted with the other, and contained the following communications, which Carrington read aloud as he leaned on Moor's shoulder:

"I am well aware, Mr. Moor, that you have counted upon succeeding my lord as the next Baron Waldemar and owner of all his great estates."

"I know that you have lived fully up to the generous income allowed you by my lord, and that you have even gone a long way beyond it, and have raised money on postbills—a course which, if my lord knew it, would utterly alienate him from you."

"He has heard lately of various proceedings of yours, and is greatly incensed with you—so much so that he is about to change his will. He will leave all his property—entailed, freehold, and personal—to his grand-daughter Miss Floyd, while to you he will leave an income of two hundred pounds a year."

"I have long been accustomed to regard you as the next Lord Waldemar, and I beg in this situation of affairs to offer you a few suggestions."

"Miss Floyd is a beautiful blonde, about seventeen years of age—a true Floyd in looks as in other respects. She is a young lady of fine presence, and will make a stir in London drawing-rooms. She is as yet heart whole, as I learned from her attendant; but she will be beset with suitors immediately. Such beauty allied to such wealth must attract a crowd of marrying men."

"Permit me to suggest, dear Mr. Moor, that you can retrieve your otherwise utterly ruined fortunes by marrying Lord Waldemar's heiress. Should you decide to pay court at the shrine of this new beauty you will do well to come to the manor immediately; and, whatever your decision, I entreat you to preserve this communication a secret, and to destroy this letter, as I risk my lord's displeasure in thus writing to you."

Here Darrel Moor paused in his perusal of the letter, crumpling it savagely in his hands.

"By Jove," said Carrington, "that Grimrod is a sensible fellow, you know, and his advice is good. You always had the happy faculty of being able to shift your affections with astonishing rapidity; so just give Miss Glint the slip, and hurry away to court this beautiful Yorkshire heiress."

"Carrington," cried Moor, flatteringly, "I—I'm married already to Honor Glint. Her pretty face has lured me to my ruin. I'm done for—completely done for. I've beggared myself for a girl's fair face."

He uttered a volley of oaths that made the young bride's blood run cold in her veins.

"You have done it!" ejaculated Carrington, with a whistle. "Now it's all for love and the world well lost! You'll have to study for a profession—"

"I'm too old for that."

"Enter the army—"

"I hate the army."

"Get Lord Waldemar to give you a living, then take holy orders."

"I won't. I like ease and my own will. I won't

work; I won't become a mere cypher in society; I won't prune my luxurious tastes. I will become what I believed myself already, Lord Waldemar's heir. I fairly hate the sight of Honor Glint, since it is to her I owe my prospective poverty. I cannot take her to Yorkshire. She is an incubus upon me. I am tired of her already. I will rid myself of her—"

"And marry the heiress?"

Darrel Moor arose abruptly, a sinister glow in his eyes and a cruel smile on his thin lips.

At this juncture the clergyman entered the vestry with the two newly wedded couples and their friends, and close behind them came Moor's valet, announcing that his master's cab was in waiting.

Honor arose from the chair in which she had crouched, hearing all that had passed between Moor and his friend, and beckoning to her bewildered maid, saying:

"Come, Lucky, we will not wait."

White as any spirit, the young girl flitted out of the vestry door, followed closely by her attendant. They threaded the church and gained the street. Avoiding the waiting cabs, the young mistress and maid hurried up the street, turning the nearest corner.

They had scarcely disappeared from the chapel when Darrel Moor and his friend re-entered the vestry. They saw at the first glance that the bride and her maid had gone.

"By Jove!" cried Carrington. "The girl must have heard the whole thing! The door is thin, you see. She has given you the slip, Moor."

Darrel Moor did not answer. One of the brides was signing her name to the register, and his eyes were fixed upon the page. He approached his valet, keeping a strange, sidelong glance upon the marriage register.

"Bing," he whispered, softly, "I'll give you ten guineas if you'll manage to cut out that page for me. Hush! Not a word. Their backs'll be turned presently. In the confusion you may do it, or else you can contrive to get locked into the church, and you can break open the old safe and cut the leaf out at your leisure."

Without waiting for an answer he turned to his friend who stood near him.

"Come, Carrington," he said, with a cruel gleam in his eyes. "The first thing to be done is to find my bride. Her tongue may attempt to work mischief. She'll have to learn that I'm her husband—and her master!"

They hurried from the church together.

(To be continued.)

At Wimbledon the Queen's Prize has been won by Sergeant Michie, of the London Scottish, with a score of 45, the winning score last year being 68.

NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE is about to come down, and a new street from Charing Cross to the Thames Embankment is to take its place. The purchase money is said to be 489,500*l*.

BARON JULES CLOQUET has presented to the Museum of the Louvre one of the finest Bernard de Palissy dishes in existence. It is large, oval, bordered with foliage, and ornamented in the centre with a lobster the size of life, holding in its claws an expiring fish. The enamel is in perfect preservation.

CONSIDERABLE improvements have been effected in the decoration and arrangement of the works of Flaxman, collected in the University College, Gower Street. Flaxman is duly honoured there, and students should avail themselves of the opportunity of inspecting the noble collection of sculptures and drawings by the great English master.

INTERNAL USE OF CARBOLIC ACID.—Now that this acid is being tried internally we should ascertain in what doses it may be poisonous. MM. Paul Bert and Joyet, of Paris, have undertaken experiments to make out this point. Between forty-five and sixty grains will kill a dog of large size; nor should it be concluded that a man could bear a dose in proportion to his weight compared to that of the dog, as thirty grains of hydrochlorate of morphia have been injected into the jugular vein of a dog without killing him. Of course one-fourth of this dose would kill a man. The above-mentioned authors state that carbolic acid is a powerful poison, which, very imprudently, is left in the hands of anybody, either in solution or in the solid state. The former is the most dangerous, as some weak solutions for internal use are sold, as well as very strong ones intended for external use. Thus mistakes may easily occur. MM. Bert and Joyet find that carbolic acid acts like strychnine on the excitability of the spinal marrow. It increases its sensibility, like strychnine, at first; but it diminishes that sensibility, or completely abolishes it, when the convulsive stage has exhausted the medulla. The phenomena resulting from carbolic acid are said by our authors to be quite similar to those produced by chloroform, chloral, ether, morphia, and the action of a motor nerve.



[THE RETURN.]

CECIL VANE'S SECOND LOVE.

"ANNIE, Annie, darling, it is bitter, hard to part for so many long years, but, come what will, we will be true to each other, my little love!"

"Oh, yes, Cecil; that is the only comfort in it all—the thought that nothing can separate us who love each other better than all the world besides."

Then Annie Wentworth looked with tearful, trusting eyes into the tender, boyish face bending over her, and was held in one long, last, loving embrace, and after this he led her down the steps and placed her in the carriage, where her father and mother were already waiting, and the father said, with husky voice: "Never mind, Cecil, my boy; you two are but children yet, and remember you have my promise to come and claim my little girl for your wife in five years. Heaven bless you!" and the mother responded with a hand-shake and a second "Heaven bless you, my son!" and Annie laid her small, fluttering hand in her young lover's with an unspoken good-bye; then the door of the carriage closed between Cecil and Annie, who had scarcely been separated a day before in their lives, and Mr. Wentworth went with his wife and family to their new home in a distant county, and poor, lonely Cecil was left with nothing, as he thought, to live upon but the memory of the past and the hopes and aims hidden in the future, which all clustered about his little love—Annie Wentworth.

The day of Annie's departure was the most desolate one of all his life, and when evening came it seemed as though he was cut entirely adrift from all that could make life endurable—shut off from his Annie, with whom he had spent almost every evening for years, as completely, in one sense, as though she were dead. Poor boy! he walked up and down in his chamber—for he lived among strangers, never having known any other home since his earliest recollections but in Mr. Wentworth's family—and for a time he chafed like a caged lion,

then in his dreariness it occurred to him to write to Annie, and have a letter awaiting her as a pleasant surprise when she should arrive at her destination. So he gathered his writing materials about him, and wrote of all his love, his hopes, and his present desolation, and renewed his vows of undying affection.

Calm, if not composed, he laid his letter aside, after having kissed the superscription, took a little curl of soft brown hair from inside a velvet case, smoothed it with caressing fingers, and replaced the precious memento; then he lifted from its side the miniature of his little love, with its waving curls falling about the fair young face, and the soft blue eyes looking so sweetly and trustingly into his own, and gazed upon it long with a pitiful smile of love that would have well nigh broken little Annie Wentworth's tender heart could she have seen it.

At last he turned from it with a weary sigh and sat down to read a chapter from his pocket Testament, Annie's parting gift, then, with his nightly prayer of "Our Father," Cecil Vane went to bed, to dream of the past and the future, and, through all his dreams, clear and sweet was limned the gentle face of Annie Wentworth—his first little love.

Three years went by, and though Annie was still very precious in Cecil Vane's sight she was not so real to him; he said he loved her still, that he ever should love her, but in the letters of both there was a perceptible falling off in their intensity of feeling; they had become more like such letters as a brother and sister would send to each other; neither did they write so frequently, and Cecil, who, for the first year of Annie's absence, steadily ignored all the young girls of his acquaintance, had now become quite a beau among them, always with the understanding that it was only as a matter of friendship or courtesy, and that over them all Annie Wentworth reigned queen of his heart.

Things were in the above state when Cecil first

met Agatha Bryce, then a change came o'er the spirit of his dreams.

Cecil Vane was now no longer a boy, but a man of three-and-twenty, with a mature face and a form that towered head and shoulders above the majority of the young men of his acquaintance; in short he was admitted by all who knew him to be of remarkably *distinguished* appearance, and, being a man of unquestionable talent, he had already, by his application to business and his well-timed investments, placed himself on the sure road to fortune.

Besides these other gifts he was well versed in the classics, and his cultivated manners gave him the *entrée* into the first society.

Agatha Bryce was no common person. She was tall and stately in all her movements, with masses of wavy black hair folded away from her white brow, and coiled in a shining mass at the back of her finely shaped head, which rose up from her neck gracefully as a swan's; with eyes—wonderful dark, liquid eyes—that spoke such volumes when looking into your own, or when the long dark fringes of their white lids rested upon the pure, colourless cheeks; a delicate, high-bred nose, with its thin, sensitive nostrils; and a mouth that oracles might have called a trifle large, which redeemed the expression of her otherwise too haughty face by the sweet, womanly smile lurking about it in hidden corners, occasionally revealing itself wholly, giving one a glimpse of small pearly white teeth.

Here you have a picture of Agatha Bryce's personal characteristics without her manners, which were those of a lady—a perfect, high-toned lady—in every thought, movement, and action of her high-bred person.

Agatha Bryce could no more help being a lady than she could help living.

Agatha Bryce, this perfect lady, had a charm for Cecil Vane from the very moment of their meeting; her rich, trailing, gray silk robes fell so gracefully about her, with neither ruffle nor frill, relieved at the throat and wrists with soft Mechlin lace, yellow with age, and not an ornament save a bright flower or ribbon to fasten her collar or half hidden amid the wavy braids of her beautiful hair. Being so different in this simple matter of dress from other women of Cecil's acquaintance was one of this lady's attractions for him; then the dignity of her bearing, and the cultivated voice, which never uttered a syllable but was honest, refined, sweet, and sensible, had well nigh led Cecil Vane a captive before he was aware of it.

When Cecil Vane discovered the above truth he set about remedying it; he avoided Agatha Bryce as much as he could without being guilty of rudeness; he took to writing weekly letters again to Annie Wentworth, trying to put into them all the warmth of their early attachment; he sat for a half-hour with her sweet miniature before him, endeavouring to go back in his honest heart to the old time of their young love; and he tried to believe he had done so when a letter from Annie came proposing that they should both drop their correspondence, save as friends, and be at entire liberty for one year; after that, if they were still of one mind, she would become his little wife.

Annie Wentworth had proved herself a far-sighted little woman.

At first Cecil Vane was pained at this, but upon second thought he was relieved, and wrote commending the wisdom of this plan; but still assuring Annie that he was reasonably certain that no other woman could take her place in his love.

It was pleasant, Cecil Vane admitted to himself, to visit Agatha Bryce without the thought that he was wronging his love, Annie Wentworth, and at her request to be able to have the opportunity to study this new type of womanhood; and, as Agatha cast off her reserve with him, their relations grew to be more and more tender, until one day Cecil Vane woke as one out of a pleasant dream to find himself the affianced husband of queenly Agatha Bryce.

A month of his second engagement went by, and in his first great happiness he had not written to his discarded love, Annie Wentworth; another month went by, and though he had written letter after letter he had destroyed each and every one, for when he would have sent them her fair face looking out from the miniature case would seem to appeal to him for pity, and he had not the heart to put the bitter cup of disappointment to those sweet lips.

At last he began to think this would not be so if his love for the gentle girl was dead in his heart, and, with the strange inconsistency of a man, he said his feelings for Agatha Bryce must be admiration, or else it was possible for a man to love two women at the same time, for he was sure that he still loved his first love, Annie Wentworth.

With the above conviction there was but one course to be pursued, and that was to open all his honest heart to Agatha Bryce.

This he did, and Agatha, like the noble woman she was, withdrew her claim and bid him go to his first love, Annie Wentworth, of whom Cecil had told her

previous to their own engagement. Even in her own great sorrow she commiserated the man before her more than she pitied herself, and with a smile and a "Heaven speed you if it is right, Cecil," she turned from the only man she had ever loved, or ever could love, and went to her chamber to seek comfort in her grief, far bitter than death, from the one only source where comfort is possible to be found. Then Agatha Bryce went into her new life a disappointed but a better and stronger woman, ready for every good work.

With a sense of relief in the thought that he had acted up to the honest conviction of his heart, and with remorseful feeling that he had placed the noble Agatha Bryce in so false a position, Cecil Vane hastened his arrangements to set out upon his visit to claim Annie Wentworth as his wife. But, strive as he would, Agatha Bryce, the fair, stately woman who had so nearly usurped Annie's place in his affections, came between him and the sweet memories of his early love, like a strong, visible presence, but in no wise deterred him in his present plans. So he went on to the end of his journey, and once more after five years he stood face to face with Annie Wentworth.

What was there in that meeting that fell so far short of their anticipations as the once boy-and-girl lovers clasped hands and looked into each other's eyes? With quick intuition they felt that they could never, never go back to the old days. Swift as an arrow from a bow Cecil Vane's heart went out to the noble, suffering woman he had left behind him, and he knew that no other must be his wife save Agatha Bryce! And Annie Wentworth thought of Edwin Fordyce, their young minister, and knew her heart was his in Heaven's sight. And each knew the other's thoughts. So Annie, looking up into her boy-lover's face, said, with calm smiles breaking up into her blue eyes:

"We will be brother and sister, Cecil!" And Cecil drew the fair head to his manly bosom and smoothed the soft brown curls with a touch as tender as a woman's as he whispered:

"Even so, Annie, my darling." Cecil Vane, once more at home, went out for a walk, and to settle his plans for the future, when the one who held all his thoughts came slowly down the old lane with her gliding, majestic step, her soft, shining robes trailing noiselessly over the fresh green grass, heedless of the fair spring life all about her, oblivious of the presence of the man who had been more than all of life beside to her, who stood, partially concealed, leaning against the gnarled, giant trunk of an old elm tree.

At one glance he took in all—the change in Agatha—the subdued air, the hands folded hopelessly one over the other, the mouth with its hidden smiles replaced by an expression of tender sadness, and, more than all, the indescribable pathos in the great, liquid eyes partially bent upon the ground.

Had he seen her half an hour before he would have thought her another woman; but here he saw Agatha Bryce in one of her weak moments.

Cecil Vane stole softly out from the shadow of the old elm, and, placing himself in her path, broke upon her dream with:

"Agatha, Agatha, I have come back to you, my second love! My love for Annie Wentworth was a boyish dream. You are the one only woman in the world for me! Do you believe it? Will you be my wife, Agatha Bryce?"

For a minute she stood without changing her position, like one in a dream, then the noble face and the wonderful eyes lit up with a sort of tenderly radiant glory, and, starting forward, she laid her two hands in his with the glad cry:

"My woman's heart tells me it is true! I will be yours—for ever and ever your loving, trusting wife, Cecil Vane!" H. N. H.

CALIFORNIAN BEET SUGAR.—The manufacture of beet sugar promises to become a very large interest in California, where the yield of the beet is enormous and the climate highly favourable to its abundant yield of saccharine matter. Two large sugaries are in successful operation—one at Alvarado, the other at Sacramento. A third is mentioned as about to be organized on one of the Tule Islands (Sherman), where 40 tons of beet per acre are expected to be raised. An average crop on the uplands is about 12 tons per acre, worth at the sugary a little more than 11. per ton.

PEASANT ORNAMENTS.—The collections of characteristic peasant ornaments which occupy a not inconsiderable portion of the International Exhibition jewellery gallery, have lately received additional contributions from abroad. Some thirty silver ornaments have just arrived from South Albania, and comprise representative pieces worn in Avlona, Paramythia, Metzevo, Calarytis, and Konitza. These places furnish the main type of the most noteworthy tribes of Epirus; and nearly all the ornaments com-

mon in other districts of the country take after the styles which may be said to be indigenous to those five localities. A set of curious head-dresses and bridal ornaments from Germany has also lately been added to the jewellery collection. Almost the whole of the peasant jewellery exhibited is the property of Her Majesty's Commissioners, so that we may look to this interesting collection probably not being dispersed after the close of the exhibition.

UNPOPULARITY OF WOMEN.

THERE is no denying the fact that women are not so popular among men as they used to be. Marriages are not so numerous in comparison with the population, and, if we may infer anything from the Divorce Court, they cannot be so successful. What is the reason of it all? Are men more exigent, or are women less loving? Is it our fault or theirs? No right-thinking man wishes women to be ignorant or silly, but no man wants to see their intellects cultivated to the exclusion of their affections, the deadening of their instincts, or the annihilation of their sense of duty.

It is one thing to have for a wife a mere brainless doll, whose ideas of life are bounded by fashion on the right side and pleasure on the left, and another thing to have a learned mummy, whose heart has become atrophied in favour of her head, and who has dropped the sweetest characteristics of her womanhood in the class-room.

It may be quite right and proper that women should understand conic sections and the differential calculus if they are strongly impelled that way—that they should even put enthusiasm into the study of logarithms, and find enjoyment in digesting some of the toughest doctrines of political economy; but it is better that they should be tender to men and gentle to children, careful housekeepers, kindly mistresses, pure-toned leaders of society. It is good for them to have knowledge, but better to keep love. Yet this is just what so many of the "advanced" women have not kept. The odd antagonism to men professed by them, and the painful depreciation of all the home life, both in its affections and its duties, which they declare has created almost a distinct class among them, and it is not a lovely one. They are enthusiastic for the franchise, and passionate for an equal share in the so-called privileges of men, but they are only scornful of the disabilities and obligations alike of sex in all that relates to marriage, the home, and children. In their regard for intellectual ambition they have ceased to respect the emotional side of human nature; and in their demand for free trade in the work of the world, for leave to share in all the specialities of the man's life, they have forgotten that part of their own happiness lies in ministering to his.

This, then, is the reason why they are not so popular among men as they used to be. Rivals in the place of helpmates—antagonists, not lovers—can it be wondered at if men have followed as they have been led, and have left off adoring a group of indeterminate persons who only desire to be feared?

This is one class of women who are unpopular with men, and deservedly so. Another is that of the women whose whole souls are centred upon "getting on in society," and who regard men, as husbands, merely as stepping-stones to that end. Marriage means with them a banker's book and the liberty accorded to the wife which was denied to the maiden. The man counts for nothing, provided always he is not exceptionally stingy, tyrannical, or jealous. Granted a moderate amount of liberality and easiness of temper, and he may be ugly, old, vicious, utterly unlovable throughout. What does it matter? He has money; and money is the Moloch of our day. So the woman of this class passes through the sacrificial fire all her best affections, her poetry and aspirations, her hopes, her dreams, and sells herself for so much a year sterling—"getting on in society" being her reward.

It is not because the grapes are sour that poor men dread and dislike this class of women, and it is only because human perceptions are so easily blinded by vanity and passion that the very men who pay the price ignore the worthlessness of the thing they buy. Sometimes knowledge comes when too late, and the Stepping-stone awakens to the fact that, though money may pay for youth and beauty, it cannot buy honour or yet love, and that the woman who sells herself in the first instance has rarely anything to give in the second.

How can we wonder, then, that with these two sections of womanhood, so large and important as they now are, women should be less popular with men than they used to be, and marriage held a thing to be shy of, or undertaken only under extremity? To be sure we men are poor fellows as bachelors, in spite of our freedom and the desolate liberty of the latch-key. That traditional button of ours is always

coming off, and we sigh in vain for the deft fingers of the ideal woman while we prick our own in our clumsy attempts to sew it on again. We are bagged by our housekeepers, neglected by our landladies, and cheated by both. We fare vilely in chambers, worse in lodgings, and club living is not economical. The dingy room, unswept and ill-garnished, is but a miserable kind of home, as we sorrowfully confess to our own souls if we are afraid to carry the secret farther. And yet we live on in growing discontent, hating much what we have, but dreading more what we have not. Meanwhile the country swarms with unmarried women, and sociologists shake their heads at the phenomenon, seeking to account for it on every plea but the right one.

Of course we do not deny the actual numerical redundancy of women in England, but we do say positively that more girls are unmarried than need be, while many good men are vowed to celibacy and buttonless discomfort because women have lost the trick of loving as they used to love—because they have abjured the old virtues of patience, modesty, tenderness, self-sacrifice, home-keeping, and home-blessing, old characteristics of them, and have become cold and hard and worldly and self-assertive instead—because they have ceased to be women in all that constitutes true womanhood, consequently have ceased to charm men as in aforetime.

WINGED REPTILES.—The remains of an extinct species of winged reptiles were recently found in Western Kansas. The expanse of both wings in one of the specimens measured twenty feet and in another twenty-two feet. They are the largest specimens of this strange race of giant bats yet discovered by geologists.

A RARE BOOK.—The copy of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, sold by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson, and Hodge, for 670*l.* on the 22nd of June last, formerly belonged to John Peachey, Lord Selsey, and was included in the nine days' sale of books from West Dean, near Chichester. The Marquis of Clanricarde was the vendor. Henry John, third Baron Selsey (son of John, second baron), died on the 10th of March, 1838, without issue, and was succeeded by his sister Caroline Mary. She married the Rev. Leveson Vernon Harcourt, and died on the 16th of July, 1871, a widow, without issue, after enjoying the family estates and possessions for more than 33 years. The Sussex estates, West Dean, Selsey, Wihorrough, Shipley, Cowfold, and others, also at Barkway, in Herts, the library, furniture, and effects at Canons, Newalls, etc., have been disposed of by the Marquis of Clanricarde. The family is not extinct. There are existing descendants through females; but the senior branch of the family, as represented by John K. Peachey, is numerous.

THE EAST LONDON MUSEUM.—The East London Museum will be a great boon to the million who dwell in that dreary and monotonous part of the metropolis we have no doubt. It is not without good reason that the East-enders have always complained that their district is the least favoured part of London; but this museum will be some little relief and consolation. Certainly some arrangement could be made by which the British Museum might give up some of its superfluous treasures for the benefit of this new institution. At the former national establishment, which the East-enders can very rarely visit, there are numerous duplicates and even triplicates, while sculpture, etc., is stored away in vaults into which the public is not admitted. To remove some of these redundant treasures would be a relief in one direction and a boon in the other, and the suggestion is all the more important when it is borne in mind that the treasures lent to the East London Museum by Sir Richard Wallace (without which the contents of the place would be poor indeed) will remain there for a year only.

THE NEW ARMY SCHEME.—We have received from the War Office a supplementary report by the War Office Committee on the organization of the military land forces of the kingdom. Several changes are proposed, based upon representations made to the committee since the original scheme was framed. It is proposed that the number of military brigade districts in Scotland shall be reduced by one, while those of England and Wales will be increased by one each. There will then be fifty districts in England and Wales, with an average of 209,000 males for each district; and eight Scotch districts, with an average of 200,213 males. It is proposed to abolish two of the four districts originally assigned to London, and to create three new rural districts, one with brigade depot in North Yorkshire, one with depot at Worcester, and one with depot at Dorchester. In such districts of England and Wales as consist of more than one county it is proposed to attach to the depot of any brigade district the militia battalion of the county in which the depot is situated, leaving the

militia battalions of the remaining counties at their present headquarters. It is then proposed to train the recruits of the militia battalion attached to the brigade depot at that depot either for three months on enlistment or for two or three months immediately before the training of the battalion. The staff of detached militia battalions whose headquarters coincide with a line station will be placed under the immediate command of the senior line officer at such station, but only for the purpose of discipline. By these regulations it is hoped to further the co-operation of the militia and line.

SHELLING PEAS AT COVENT GARDEN MARKET.—The mention of Covent Garden Market amongst other things naturally suggests green peas, and green peas as naturally suggest roast duck and stewed lamb—two very dainty dishes to set before kings or anybody else. Shelling peas in Covent Garden is a great industry. When the regular pea season is in full swing all hands are busy shelling them for the cook's hands. On every vacant spot in and about the market groups of women and girls are to be seen seated around well-filled hampers of peas in the pod, each with a basin in her lap, and each busily plying her fingers to supply the increasing demand for shelled peas. The quantity of this vegetable disposed of every morning in Covent Garden is something marvellous; loads and loads are discharged by the market gardener's carts, large quantities more come by rail and are delivered by the waggons of the several companies; and yet, enormous as the deliveries are, it is seldom indeed that any remain over from one day to another. The succulent dainties are therefore always supposed to be fresh and sweet; or, if any be a little stale, they are so deftly mixed with the fresh arrivals as to escape detection. A visit to Covent Garden market is well worth making at any time; but to the curious as to how the great way of London is filled from day to day, the market in early morning in the pea season is a sight that will fully repay the trouble of getting up in time to see it—said time being, say, between four and six o'clock.

ON SCALE IN ART.—Nature herself has taught those who study her works how implicitly she is bound by the law of scale. All organic growth and development is limited by this great principle. The range of scale, which is primarily determined by the size of the earth itself, or, more correctly speaking, by the force of gravity on the surface of the planet, applies to the different great provinces of the organic kingdoms with a precision that is distinctly intelligible. Thus the widest range is found, as might be expected, in the vegetable kingdom. Among planets we find a perfect gradation of size, from the microscopic forms of the parasitic fungi to the lofty spires of the cone-bearing trees, the monarch of which, the Wellingtonia gigantea, springs to a height of 300 feet. Among animals the range of scale is determined by the abode and habit of the class. Thus, aquatic animals of each of the three great provinces which are defined by the character of the nervous system vary in size almost as much as vegetables themselves. The floor of the Atlantic is gradually rising in consequence of the deposit of the exuviae of the microscopic creatures that form the chalk strata. The bulk of the whale attains a magnitude which would render locomotion on land painful, if not impossible. Not only the marine animals proper, but the terrestrial animals of marine habits are remarkable for the large size which they attain when compared to their earth-inhabiting congeners. A full roundness of form, admirably suited for flotation, marks the hippopotamus as the representative in the equatorial lakes and rivers of the great pachydermatous family now gradually becoming extinct.

HABITUAL DRUNKARDS.—The following Act of Parliament is copied from a collection of "Laws and Acts made by Kings and Queens of Scotland," collected and extracted from the Public Records by Sir Thomas Murray, of Glendock, by His Majesty's Special Warrant, Anno Dom. MDCLXXXII.—"King James, the Sixth XXII. Parliament, xxviii. June, 1617. Act 20. Against the punishment of drunkards, it is statute and ordained by our Sovereign Lord, with advice and consent of the Estates of Parliament for the restraint of the vile and detestable vice of drunkenness daily increasing, to the high dishonour of God, and great harme to the whole realme. That all persons lawfully convict of drunkenness, or of haunting of taverns and alehouses, after two hours at night, or any time of the day, except in time of travel, or for ordinary refreshments, shall for the first fault pay 3*l*, or in case of inability or refusal to be put in joggles or jayle for the space of six hours; for the second fault to pay 5*l*, or in case of inability or refusal to be kept in stocks or jayle for the space of 12 hours; and for the third fault to pay 10*l*, or in case foresaid to be kept in stocks or jayle for the space of 24 hours; and thereafter, if they transgresse, to be committed to jayle till

they find caution for their good behaviour in time coming. And for the better execution of these presents, special power, authority, and commission is granted, and committed to all Sheriffs, Stewards, Provests, and Bailies, Justices of the Peace, and Kirk Sessions, within every parish to call, convene, and try the foresaids persons, unawares to uplift ad pios necessities usis, in every parish to apply, and all and sundry other things to do and exerce, which necessarily is required for execution of these presents."

FACETIE.

FAMILY JARS.—Somebody says there are two kinds of family jars: into one you put your sweetmeats, into the other you put your foot.

ALL ACTIVITY.—Eels and an ignominious—the former in a lime basket, and the latter when he changes his religion.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A WALKS AND A YOUNG WIDOW? One is a giddy whirl, and the other a widy-girl.

PROOF POSITIVE.—One gentleman inquired of another whether a certain doctor had any practice "Oh, yes," was the reply, "I assisted in laying out one of his patients the other day."

WHERE PINS GO TO.—The inquiry as to where all the pins go to has been satisfactorily answered. The theory now is that they go into the ground and become terra-pins.

INDUCTIVE FLATTERY.

"That is a portrait of dear papa before he wore a beard and moustache, you know."

"Indeed! How very lovely your mamma must have been!"—*Punch*.

A HEARTY WISH.

Irish Beggardomman: "Spare a poor widdy a thrifle, yer honner, an' may the heavens be yer bed!" (Sheel gives her a copper). "An' may the blessed saints grant ye better circumstances!"—*Fun*.

A FIGURATIVE REPLY.—A young man asked a young lady her age, and she replied: "6 times 7 and 7 times 3 added to my age will exceed 6 times 9 and 4, as double my age exceeds 20." The young man said he thought she looked much older.

HAZARDOUS.

Husband: "If cook isn't punctual to-day, love, give her a good—Blow her up well!"

Wife: "My dear Charles!—Well, will you come and stand behind the door with your life-preserver?"—*Punch*.

A ONE-WHEEL CARRIAGE.—A wag some time ago advertised a carriage to perform without horses, with one wheel, and invited all curious mechanics to see it. Many members of the Society of Arts attended, and in their ardour of expectation were shown a Wheelbarrow!

BURNING LATHER.—"So there's another rupture at Mount Vesuvius," said Mrs. Partington as she put down the paper and put up her specs; "the paper tells us about the burning lather running down the mountain, but it don't tell how it got fire."

TEXAN GAME.

Sporting Stranger, newly arrived in Texas: "Any game hereabouts, sir?"

Texan: "Reckon so, and plenty of 'em. There's bluff and poker, and ouiche, and all fours, and moute, and jest as many others as you like to play!"

GIVING.

"Do you find the bump of generosity there?" said a "subject," whose head was undergoing phrenological inspection.

"There is something here rather giving!" said the man of heads, pressing his fingers on the skull.

SO NEER AND YET SO FAR.

The Vicar (vainly trying to elicit the name of the Serpent by leading questions): "Well, really, children, what is that creeping thing that everybody has such a horror of?"

Little Fanny: "Oh, if ye please, sir—a neetwig."—*Fun*.

A DEFINITION.

Teddy: "I say, gran'pa—what's the meaning of raising your choler?"

Grandpa: "When one's made angry and disagreeable."

Teddy: "Oh, because then you're stuck-up like a stick-up collar!"—*Fun*.

Too HEAVY A PRISON.—A veteran who has fought for his country on many a field in one of our Highland regiments, and had almost lost the use of his eyesight on the burning sands of Egypt, was induced by his friends some time since to apply to a famous eye doctor temporarily resident at Braemar. Like many of his class, the worthy old soldier dearly loved

his glass, and on applying to the man of medicine was informed that his sight would soon be restored, only that he must not drink any more whisky, otherwise the cure would not avail. The soldier, or pensioner, was silent a moment, and then quietly remarked, "Weel, weel, sir, an' that be the price of the cure I'll just be dain without it; I am nae gawn to lose the use o' the wa'a for the sake o' the windows."

FAITH IN DEVELOPMENT.

Fond Mother (at the Militia Barracks): "How well our Joe do it, don't he? Look! I believe he'll be a General some day!"

Father: "Shouldn't wonder at all, my dear! Why, I've heard as Field-Marshal the great Dick o' Wellington hisself was only a Irishman once!"—*Fun*.

"AN ICE DISTINCTION."—In an account of the Sheriff's dinner recently it was stated that the three Hindoo gentlemen present wished it made public that they confused themselves at the dinner to "fruit and rice." For rice should have appeared "ice." They hold it, Mr. Sheriff Bennett says, of much importance that this correction should appear, as they might otherwise be held to have lost caste.

THE STAFF OF LIFE.

We clip this curious advertisement from the Birmingham Daily Post:

Baking business and everything for use. Profits 3 per week. Illness came of living. Best low. Good thoroughfare. Price 30*l*.—Address, etc.

We should like to learn what sort of illness it is that causes living. Our acquaintance lies chiefly among illnesses that cause dying.—*Fun*.

JUVENILE SPORT.—There are three Gun Clubs, the Hurlingham, the Senior, and the Junior. The gamery of these gun clubs consisting in the practice of shooting domestic pigeons there is only one of them that could be approved of in any measure by any true sportsman. That one is, or would be if constituted as its name implies, the Junior Gun Club. If the members of that club were so many schoolboys there would be something to be said for it; namely, that it is an institution serving to teach the young idea how to shoot.—*Punch*.

A YOUTHFUL YARNER.

"Sonny, where's your father?"

"Father's dead, sir."

"Have you any mother?"

"Yes, I had one, but she's got married to Joe Duck-

lin, and doesn't be my mother any longer, 'cause she's

got enough to do to tend to his young 'uns."

"Smart boy, here's a penny for you."

"That's you, sir; that's the way I gits my

livin'!"

"How?"

"Why, by tellin' yarns to greenys like you be at

a penny a pop!"

A SUGGESTIVE PICTURE.—Smith and Jones stopped

before the beautiful picture of three horses drinking

at a fountain, entitled, "A Temperance Society."

Says Jones, "What does that picture suggest?"

Smith, who is a rabid temperance man, replies, "It

suggests that we should all drink water."

"But," asks Smith of his companion, who is fond of his

"tod," "what do you think it suggests?" "Well,"

was the characteristic reply, "I should say it sug-

gests that we take three drinks." Smith bade his

companion good-morning, and left in disgust.

THE BISHOP AND HIS SWINE.

The Bishop of Wurtzburg once asked a sprightly

shepherd boy:

"What are you doing here, my lad?"

"Tending swine."

"How much do you get?"

"One florin a week."

"I also am a shepherd," continued the bishop,

"but I have a much better salary."

"That may all be, but then I suppose you have

more swine under your care," innocently replied the

boy.

EXCHANGE NO ROBERT.

A contemplative contemporary thus meditates:

Adam Smith defined man as an animal that makes

bargains. Certainly he is right. No other animal does

this. No dog exchanges bones with another.

We fear Adam Smith never went to a menagerie,

and that it is too late to offer to take him to one,

but we shall be happy to take our contemporary to

the Zoo—any Monday. He will there see in the

monkey house each individual monkey helping him-

self to his neighbour's provisions and so intent on

the bargain that he does not see that another neigh-

bour is helping himself to his. If this doesn't look

like modern speculation we don't know what it re-

sembles.—*Fun*.

MRS. JONES'S RETORT.

A correspondent sends us the following spirited

advertisement, which does its author's justice

credit:

TO THE PUBLIC.—Whereas my husband, Edward

H. Jones, has falsely advertised that I have left his bed and board, and that he will pay no debts of my contracting, etc., this is to inform the public that the aforesaid Edward H. Jones had neither bed nor board for me to leave, he having been living at the expense of my father; and, further, under pretence of procuring money to pay his way to Birmingham, he borrowed a pound of my father, and with that paid for his infamous advertisement against me, and even after this dastardly act, he took all the money I had, and borrowed money of my mother and left town. For the past three months he has been kept from nakedness and starvation by the exertions of myself and relatives; he squandered in dissipation all the money his inborn laziness would allow him to earn. The scamp need not have advertised that he would not pay debts of my contracting, for the public well know that he would not even pay his own. He is a lazy, ungrateful, leading scoundrel; not content with living at the expense of my relatives and borrowing their money, he publishes an outrageous falsehood.

MORE TAXES ON KNOWLEDGE.

Knowing one of those confoundedly good-tempered, impudent, unkickable-out-of-your-door sort of fellows who invite themselves to visit you upon the slightest provocation, then spend a month or so in riding your best horses, drinking your best claret, smoking your cigars, and flirting with your wife.

Having to act as a nursemaid to a lot of romping, rollicking, rampaging children, because, as their fond mother says, you know how to amuse them so much better than *Jemima* does.

Being asked to take down Lady Humgruffyn to dinner instead of pretty little Mrs. Frautleone because you happen to know something of the *Troglodytes*, or the *Dolomites*, or the *Zoophytes*, or something which happens to be her ladyship's pet theme for conversation.

Although you are really of a serious and sentimental turn of mind, being expected always to return thanks for the bridesmaids, because the fellows say you know so capitally how to make a funny speech, which is equivalent as you think to making an idiot of yourself.

Because you happen by an accident to have made the slightest possible acquaintance with a lord, being asked by snobbish friends to plague him for his autograph, or by charitable friends to dun him for subscriptions, or by inquisitive friends to ask him where he buys his boots.

Being bored perpetually to escort your country cousins to the Tower and the Thames Tunnel, and similar exciting places of amusement, for the reason that you know the way about so much better than they do.

Knowing a young couple who for certain—quite unfounded—expectations plague you to be grandfather, and, whenever you go to dine with them, persist in having baby handed round with the dessert.

Having to appear at the police-court, at the imminent risk of being misreported to your wife, in order to give evidence for one of your last friends who has been out upon the loose.

Being expected by the better halves of nearly all your bosom friends, whom you dare not disoblige, on the pain of losing your pleasantest of dinners, to "take the boys about" when they come home for the holidays, for the reason that you know so much about the diving-bell, and all the other things you know the darlings are so fond of.

Being bothered by your artist friends to be their model, gratis, for somebody historical, *Dante* on the rack, or *Titus Oates*, say, in the pillory, because you know so exactly what they want, and are so clever in assuming an uncomfortable attitude.—*Punch*.

INDIRECT CLAIMS.

Who are the arbitrators, umpires, or referees, at Geneva or elsewhere, competent to decide upon the justice, the equity, the propriety, the admissibility of such claims as the following?

The Indirect Claim of a wife when she is walking down Regent or Oxford Street with her husband, and stops before a large shop with a large plate-glass frontage to admire and point out to her companion "That lovely silk," or "That most becoming costume," or "That elegant Polonoise," with an appealing eye, and it may be, a deprecatory glance at her own deteriorating attire. The claim is strengthened if the husband is conscious that in the expiring season the balance of enjoyment has been in his favour.

The Indirect Claim of the waiter at a dining establishment where attendance is charged in the bill, who, his attentions accumulating as the meal draws to an end, is very anxious to know whether you would like some more ice in your wine, and most watchful over the safety and accessibility of your hat, overcoat, and umbrella.

The Indirect Claim of the hanger-on who suddenly appears when you have hailed a hansom, and has never yet been known to perform a more substantial

service than stand in your way as you get into the vehicle, or perhaps close one of the flaps; but who hovers, and lingers, and looks, with an expression of expectancy in his gazing eye.

The Indirect Claim of the cabman who has received his legal fare, and contemplates it as it lies in his palm with a surprised and injured air, and, possibly, if his feelings will allow him, and his manners have not become quite corrupted, with a hand raised to the brim of his hat.

The Indirect Claim of the young gentleman who is on the eve of returning to school after the holidays, and would be glad if it occurred to you that he has expenses to meet in the ensuing half.

The Indirect Claim of mamma, who offers baby for the inspection of friends and relatives.

The Indirect Claim of the young lady who presents herself to the family circle bewitchingly arrayed for her first ball.

The Indirect Claim of the juvenile author who writes to you with a presentation copy of his little volume of poems.

The Indirect Claim of the promising painter whose studio you visit to inspect the works he is sending to the Royal Academy.

The Indirect Claim of the crossing-sweepers.

The Indirect Claim of the various classes of persons who prey upon you at theatres, concerts, and other places of public annoyance and extortion.

The Indirect Claims of different sections of the community about the last week in December.—*Punch*.

A THOUGHT.

How oft when Nature is brightest

And all things are pleasant aro

A sense of sadness oppresses,

A weight on the spirit is found.

We cannot tell whence the shadow

Has come to darken our bliss,

We only feel it is present

To cause us life's beauty to miss.

And when surroundings are gloomy,

The heavens with storm-clouds o'er-

cast,

When only a requiem of sorrow

Is borne on the wings of the blast,

The soul will rise up in gladness

In despite of tempest and gloom,

And joys that dwell in the bosom

Send forth added brightness and bloom.

Not from the sphere of our dwelling

Come pleasures we find on the way,

For oft when night seems the darkest

Our hearts know the brightness of day.

The scenes of life are well portioned,

We always can bear all we meet,

And though the journey seems stormy

The bitter but equals the sweet.

M. L.

GEMS.

FRIENDSHIP is a cadence of divine melody melting through the heart.

FAITHFULNESS and sincerity are the highest things.

PRECEPTS teach us to cherish virtue, to love to give, and to follow good counsels. If they do not lead us to honesty they at least prompt us to be honest.

ARTIFICIAL wants are more numerous and lead to more expense than natural wants; from this cause the rich are oftener in greater want of money than those who have but a bare competency.

If there be a lot on earth worthy of envy it is that of a man, good and tender-hearted, who beholds his own creation in the happiness of all those who surround him. Let him who would be happy strive to encircle himself with happy beings.

A GIANT mind may be held in suspense, but that suspense must be brief, and the action which follows it will be more decided and energetic in consequence of that detention; just as a stream rushes with greater force for a temporary obstruction.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

THE very best way to clean a stained steel knife is to cut a solid potato in two, dip one of the pieces in brick dust (such as is usually used for knife cleaning), and rub the blade with it.

HOW SUMMER DRESSES SHOULD BE WASHED.—Summer dresses are nearly all made of white or buff linen, pique, cambric, or muslin, and the art of preserving the new appearance after washing is a matter of the greatest importance. Common wash-

more frequent than to see the delicate tints of lawns and percales turned into dark blotches and muddy streaks by the ignorance and vandalism of a laundress. It is worth while for ladies to pay attention to this, and insist upon having their summer dresses washed according to the directions which they should be prepared to give their laundresses themselves. In the first place, the water should be tepid, the soap should not be allowed to touch the fabric; it should be washed and rinsed quickly, turned upon the wrong side, and hung in the shade to dry, and when starched (in thin boiled but not boiling starch) should be folded in sheets or towels, and ironed upon the wrong side as soon as possible. But linen should be washed in water in which hay or a quart bag of bran has been boiled. This last will be found to answer for starch as well, and is excellent for print dresses of all kinds, but a handful of salt is very useful also to set the colours of light cambrics and dotted lawns; and a little ox gall will not only set but brighten yellow and purple tints, and has a good effect upon green.

STATISTICS.

COMMERCE OF NEW YORK.—The amount of Customs revenue collected at New York during the six months ending December 31, 1871, was 74,978,192 dol., as compared with 67,729,185 dol. in the corresponding six months of 1870. The amount of Customs revenue collected in January was 13,317,087 dol., as compared with 12,010,021 dol. in January, 1871. The value of the foreign imports at New York in January was 35,679,496 dol., as compared with 28,792,062 dol. in January, 1871; and for the seven months ending January 31 this year 218,707,772 dol., as compared with 185,131,270 dol. in the corresponding period of 1870-1. The value of the exports from New York in January to foreign ports was 20,431,366 dol., as compared with 20,987,087 dol. in January, 1871; and for the seven months ending January 31 this year 162,406,580 dol., as compared with 169,992,881 dol. in the corresponding period of 1870-1. These totals, it should be observed, are inclusive of the specie exported from New York in each period.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE *Bernina* Pass was opened on the 24th ult. for carriages.

The sale of Lord Selsey's library produced 4,757l. 6s.

THE Board of Works want to buy Northumberland House for 206,000l.

THE Bey of Tunis, who was coming to Paris and London, has renounced the idea for this season.

ORIGIN OF THE WORD "ALABAMA."—The origin of the word "Alabama" is Indian, signifying "Here is rest." There must have been *kachasun* in the native mind.

THE celebrated picture of "Godiva," by Van Lierus, of Antwerp, which was in the International Exhibition last year, has just been placed in the hands of Mr. Atkinson for engraving.

IT is proposed to raise a volunteer regiment of Foot Guards in Ottawa to act upon all necessary occasions as a guard of honour to the Governor-General of Canada.

M. CLESINGER, the sculptor, has just finished a large equestrian statue of Napoleon III., which will be purchased by subscription and sent to Chislehurst on the occasion of the Emperor's *fête* day, August 15.

THE SULTAN'S MINIATURE.—The Sultan has presented the Grand Vizier with his miniature set in diamonds. This is a distinction which is always cited in the enumeration of the honours born by an Oriental dignitary of state.

HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCESS OF WALES never looked better than at the last State Ball, and her dress was one that caused general admiration. It was composed of the new shade, called "bleu Aurora," and was most artistically trimmed with flowers of various hues.

PROPOSED INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS.—A great exhibition is announced to be held in Philadelphia, in the year 1876, the centenary of the declaration of independence, to open on the 19th of April, the anniversary of the battle of Lexington, and close on the 19th of October, the day of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis. In the accounts given in the journals it is stated that the last day for applications for space is fixed for the 4th of March, 1874, and that all the works of art and goods to be exhibited must be delivered in Philadelphia by the 1st of January, 1876. This last date must be a misprint, or the whole account looks like a hoax. A great exhibition is also spoken of at Calcutta; if there be any truth in this rumour it will doubtless soon be made known officially.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ROBERT.—The lines are declined with thanks.

B. B.—The verses about "Spring" are pretty and are very fairly written.

ROSE.—The name of the present First Lord of the Admiralty is the Right Honourable G. J. Goschen, M.P.

MAGGIE MAY.—The handwriting is very nice, and suitable for the purpose named.

S. A. M.—The note arrived too late to be of any service.

EMMA P.—Many thanks, but we are rather over-burdened with such matters just now.

A. O. K.—We do not publish the addresses of individuals, professional or otherwise.

A LOVER OF CHILDREN appears to be under a misapprehension. "A Lover of Sailors" is in search not of a wife but of a husband.

JACK THE BOWMAN and FLYING FOAM's wishes will be attended to if they each write separate letters on distinct sheets of note paper.

F. H. H.—Inquire of the bookseller or dealer in periodicals of whom you usually procure what you require in the shape of literature.

E. G. W.—You might try your chance by making a personal application at the offices of the principal steam-packet companies in the city of London.

CONTRALTO.—You will find it the cheaper plan to buy of a chemist. Amateur lozenge making requires a small apparatus and is comparatively expensive.

M. A.—The applications are somewhat indefinite, the age having been in both cases omitted. It is also desirable that each should write for herself.

HAPPY BRIDE.—The child would take the property bequeathed to it upon proof of identity. The omission of the rite of baptism would not necessarily invalidate the child's title to the property.

T. D. T.—Our opinion of your compositions is not so favourable as you could desire. You will find that our rule about not returning rejected contributions is printed every week.

LAKES OF KILLARNEY.—Foreign physicians we believe employ a seton to obviate the inconvenience complained of, a remedy which in the judgment of others is worse than the so-called disease.

G. J. S.—We are not acquainted with "Angolina," whatever may be the impression intended to be conveyed by that word, consequently we are unable to answer your question.

DAISY.—We do not recommend the use of depilatories or substances to remove superfluous hair, because there is very good authority for saying that the application of such compositions is injurious to the skin.

MRS. F.—From the tone of your letter we judge you are in some jeopardy by using patent medicines with the properties of which you are imperfectly acquainted. We recommend you to discontinue the use of the acid, and to obtain competent professional advice and assistance without delay.

ELIZA H.—We are disposed to think that if you reconsider the letter you have written you will find that in it you undertook to make a promise which you will find it difficult to perform. It may be fortunate that some one has interposed to save you from the consequences of a rash and hasty resolution.

R. S.—We do not find anything in the pieces you have recently forwarded to induce us to alter the opinion we have formerly expressed upon the style of the papers you send us. That style both as to its merits and defects appears to us to be unaltered and unimproved; it is we think unsuitable for publication.

JESSIE H.—You could use elder-flower water, which makes a cooling and refreshing lotion and will answer the desired purpose. We have intentionally omitted the other matter, being of opinion that at the age specified the lady should be sought for. Three or four years hence will be time enough for you to commence to seek if you have not then been found.

F. GOSCHEN (Bath).—You appear to require two books, one on the construction of ships and one on the art of sailing them. Your bookseller can furnish you with both at a small cost. You should ask him to get for you those numbers of Weale's rudimentary series which treat of these subjects. No. 53 star, price one shilling, contains Captain Sommerfeldt's concise statement of the practical construction of ships for ocean or river service; Nos. 55 and 56, price two shillings, treat of navigation, the sailor's sea book, how to keep the log and work it off, latitude and longitude, great circle sailing, law of storms

and variable winds, with an explanation of nautical terms; they also contain coloured illustrations of flags.

T. L.—The knowledge of the art of tanning and hiding like most other knowledge is only attained to after a good deal of patient plodding through an apprenticeship of some sort. You will choose your master according to the interpretation you place upon these terms. A skin may be dressed in two ways. The living article can be made rubescent by those famous pugilistic exercises in which youths delight. The dead coverings are utilized by a series of trappings and greasings and curings which are practised in tanneries amongst other places.

GEORGE R.—As your letter is silent about the nature of the articles you wish to exhibit the only suggestion we can make is that you should offer them to the secretary of any exhibition for which you may consider them suitable when you see such an exhibition announced in the public prints. If they have any merit they would probably be at once received either at the International Exhibition or the South Kensington or Bethnal Green Museums; but in this case your notion about a prize must remain in abeyance, for it seems superfluous to add that you cannot compete for a prize until a prize is offered.

W. M. B.—At the first glance at your lines we thought that, as an example of a devoted lover's passionate enthusiasm, they might repay perusal. But a second reading has suggested that notwithstanding some high-sounding verbiage the poetry is really deficient in warmth. Of what use is it to declare that you are here only when you also speak of lighter loves described by you as fast-decaying? Until they have decayed they will be shrewd enough to remember that they may revive, and will take care not to place herself in the way of temptation, by yielding to which she might receive her death-wound from snakes which were merely scotched and not killed.

SPRING.

Hail! genial Spring—once more we greet
Thy buds and flowers, whose rich perfume
Steals out from every tree and hedge,
And drives away stern Winter's gloom:

The birds once more begin to sing,
Their cheerful notes ring through the air;
The primrose shows its modest head,
And cowslips spring up everywhere.

Each tiny flower puts forth its buds,
The meadows are with daisies crowned,
The hawthorn now begins to bloom,
The corn is springing through the ground.

The birds that left to seek for warmth
In other climes, under autumn's rain
Began to usher Winter in,
Have to our shores returned again.

We hear again the cuckoo's note,
The swallows now their nests rebuild,
The earth, which hath so silent been,
With hum of insects now is filled.

The oak and elm put forth their buds,
The lambs are full of sport and play,
The blooming Spring has now returned,
And Winter's gloom has passed away.

B. B.

A LARGE SHEET OF PLAIN PAPER.—To which correspondents are indebted for this unusual communication we cannot tell, as it escaped our notice at the time of opening our letters. Perhaps it came in that packet which contained the copy of a will, and was sent sufficiently large to contain a copious opinion; or may be one of our friends who sends us seven or eight questions on subjects of a most opposite nature was anxious that our replies should be exhaustive—a phenomenon which he considered could only be accomplished by a writing completely extending over a space which by measurement is 2½ by 19½ inches. Alas! how impossible it is to please all; if we write on to gratify the whim of one individual we could only do so at the expense of leaving our 450,000 other subscribers, so we prudently forbear.

H. F., twenty-four, tall, fair, light blue eyes, domesticated, and fond of music. Respondent must be tall and dark; a clerk preferred.

MAUD W., nineteen, good tempered, dark and beautiful, black ringlets and blue eyes. Respondent must be good looking, fond of home and have a good income.

JACK IN THE DUST, twenty-two, 5ft. 4in., fair, good tempered, and loving; wishes to correspond with some young lady with a view to matrimony.

MINNIE B., twenty-five, tall, fair, curly hair, good tempered and loving. Respondent must be about thirty, respectable, industrious and fond of home.

MINNIE, thirty, medium height, a widow possessing a comfortable home and some money, is pretty. Respondent must be loving, kind, and fond of home.

MAY FLOWER, tall, dark, handsome, in a good position, accomplished and domesticated. Respondent should be an officer in the Army.

APPLE BLOSSOM, tall, fair, in good circumstances, handsome, accomplished and domesticated. Respondent should be a lawyer.

DACE, twenty-three, 5ft. 7in., light complexion, in a good position, with a good prospect; the lady must be well connected and educated, money no object.

L. V. Y., twenty-three, 5ft. 5in., fair, blue eyes, handsome, and a servant in the Royal Navy. Respondent must be pretty and of a loving disposition.

MARTHA, twenty-three, tall, blue eyes, light-brown hair, and very pretty. Respondent must be a tradesman, about thirty.

HELENA, nineteen, medium height, handsome, and domesticated. Respondent must not be over twenty-five, and loving.

SARAH, twenty-five, 5ft. 7in., rather dark, handsome, very affectionate, fond of home and music. Respondent must not be over thirty, tall and handsome; a mechanic preferred.

MARIA, twenty, dark, slender, loving, domesticated and fond of music, would like to marry a fair young man.

who must be about twenty-eight, intelligent, and very fond of the drama.

NELLIE, twenty, medium height, considered pretty, golden hair, and in possession of an annuity of 80l. a year, wishes to marry a gentleman who has a large business.

LIVELY POLLY, twenty-one, medium height, very fair, pretty, and has a little money. Respondent must be not more than twenty-six, handsome, affectionate, and very loving.

VIOLET F., nineteen, tall, very fair, blue eyes, golden hair, and good looking, wishes to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman with a view to matrimony; he must be loving and true.

W. A. C., twenty-one, tall, rather fair, dark hair, good looking, and loving; wishes to marry some young lady who is a loving and fond of home; the advertiser holds a situation of trust in the Navy.

EMMA M., eighteen, tall, rather fair, dark hair and eyes, loving, domesticated and good tempered. Respondent must be in the Navy, about twenty, good looking, steady, and good tempered.

AN ENGINEER, twenty-seven, tall, a widower with one child, fair with dark hair and gray eyes, in a good position, would like to marry a tall and fair young lady not above twenty-five years of age.

CHARLES JAMES, twenty-three, 5ft. 6in., dark hair, blue eyes, very fine whiskers and moustache, fond of home, and in a good position, wishes to marry a young lady about the same age, domesticated and ladylike.

EDWARD, twenty-two, would like to marry some young domesticated woman who is fond of home. "Edwards," whose announcement appeared some time since, would be preferred. "Edward" is all she requires, a ship-carpenter and able to keep a wife.

H. W., twenty-five, 5ft. 2in., handsome, and has a good business which requires another partner. Respondent should be about twenty-two years of age, rather tall, fair, of business habits, and must not object to 12 months' courtship.

EMMA F. would be glad to marry a nice young man; he must be steady, and loving, and not in too great a hurry to marry. "Emmie F." is twenty-one, brown curly hair, rather dark, handsome, of an affectionate disposition, and she thinks she would like a policeman or a respectable mechanic.

MAGGIE MAY, nineteen, an orphan, soft blue eyes, light-brown hair, intelligent, a seamstress; would like to marry a young man who would appreciate a loving heart. Respondent must be under twenty-seven, fond of the drama and warm-hearted. An intelligent mechanic resident in London preferred. "Maggie May" has no money.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

J. K. M. is responded to by—"M. S.," twenty, domesticated, economical, and would make "J. K. M." a loving wife.

FRED C. by—"Annie C.," who is all he requires.

CONSTANT by—"Jack Ratling," twenty-three, 5ft. 8in., black eyes, dark curly hair, dark and handsome.

M. S. by—"Clarice," who is quite sure she is everything "M. S." wishes.

MIXING S. by—"S. S. S.," 6ft., dark, loving, a native of a midland county, and is all "Minnie S." requires.

BURKE S. C. by—"Minnie Clyde," twenty-four, 5ft. 2in., dark hair, very good tempered and industrious.

LAURESTINA by—"J. W. C.," a sailor, twenty-two, 5ft. 7in., dark complexion and loving.

W. W. by—"Josephine," twenty, blue eyes, light-brown hair, domesticated habits; thinks she is everything "W. W." desires.

ALBERTA by—"Nelly," eighteen, tall, fond of home and children, and would make "Alfred E." a careful, loving wife.

W. MACKENZIE by—"Hetty," nineteen, handsome, fair, medium height, loving, domesticated, and fond of home.

M. H. K. by—"J. C.," twenty-two, rather tall, good tempered, in the Metropolitan Police, at present stationed in a dockyard.

CHARLES R. by—"Rose A.," she is not tall and wishes very much to live in France; she would make him a loving wife.

P. K. S. by—"Alberta," who is all he can desire, and would make him a good wife; and by—"F. G.," twenty-five, a domestic servant, dark hair and eyes, pretty, good tempered, and would make a careful and loving wife.

S. P. N. by—"Lilly," twenty, blue eyes, auburn hair, is of a lively disposition, and domesticated; thinks she would suit "S. P. N.," and by—"Beli," eighteen, petite, dark wavy hair, hazel eyes, cheerful, fond of children, domesticated and loving.

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